Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/writingsmusset01mussiala

THE WRITINGS OF

ALFRED DE MUSSET

COMPLETE IN TEN VOLUMES

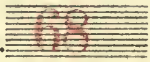
THE COMPLETE WRITINGS

of

ALFRED DE MUSSET

NEW YORK
EDWIN C. HILL COMPANY
1905

One Thousand Copies have been printed on Large Paper. The first One Hundred and Fifty sets in Levant Binding, Extra Illustrated; the remaining Eight Hundred and Fifty in Buckram.

This is Copy No. 

POEMS OF

ALFRED DE MUSSET

TALES OF SPAIN AND ITALY · NAMOUNA
SCENE IN AN ARMCHAIR · IDLE YEARNINGS
MARDOCHE · THE CUP AND THE LIPS
OF WHAT YOUNG MAIDENS DREAM
DIVERSE POEMS

DONE INTO ENGLISH BY

MARIE AGATHE CLARKE

Namouna.
To the couch of her lover.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY

M. BIDA · HENRI PILLE

VOLUME ONE

PRINTED FOR SUBSCRIBERS ONLY BY
EDWIN C. HILL COMPANY
1905

Namouna.
To the couch of her lover.

POEMS OF

ALFRED DE MUSSET

TALES OF SPAIN AND ITALY · NAMOUNA
SCENE IN AN ARMCHAIR · IDLE YEARNINGS
MARDOCHE · THE CUP AND THE LIPS
OF WHAT YOUNG MAIDENS DREAM
DIVERSE POEMS

DONE INTO ENGLISH BY

MARIE AGATHE CLARKE

ILLUSTRATIONS BY

M. BIDA · HENRI PILLE

VOLUME ONE

PRINTED FOR SUBSCRIBERS ONLY BY
EDWIN C. HILL COMPANY
1905

COPYRIGHT, 1905, BY
EDWIN C. HILL COMPANY

EDWIN PRESS

PQ
2369
A7
1905
v.1

POEMS OF ALFRED DE MUSSET

TO THE READER OF THE TWO VOLUMES OF VERSE BY THE AUTHOR

I SAY in serious truth
This book is all my youth;
And what herein is wrought
Is writ with scarce a thought.

As man is changing still,
Why change the good or ill
That gave the past its life?
Go, bird, on swiftest wing,
To those thy message bring
Who still endure the strife.

Dear reader, bear with me,
Nor judge too hastily;
Blame not, nor yet commend,
Until you've reached the end.

My earliest verse was by a child;
The next betrays a youth as mild;
The last can scarce in realms of song
Be deemed a man's work, nobly strong.

TO MADAME B——

When thee I loved, I would my life have given
To make thee happy; but now, nevermore
Canst thou awake that passion as of heaven
That thrilled me once, deep down to my heart's core.
Thy snares are foolish, smiles and sobs are vain
To move me as of old—thy magic fled.
The deep deception that hath given pain,
Hath slain thy beauty, and thy charms are dead.
Just as a child within a chamber dim
Espies a suit of armor and with fear
Sinks back affrighted, and fears following him
Some spectral warrior ever moving near;
But by the curtain's folds, at break of day,
He sees the harmless phantom, feels its dress,
And with a laugh throws all his fears away,
And cries, "How foolish I, to fear a tin cuirass!"

TO JUNGFRAU

JUNGFRAU, the traveler who ascends thy peak
And stands in triumph on the stainless snows,
Feels fierce exultance in his soul, that beats
Its wings of victory where the sunrise glows,
And like the eagle longs to ever soar
Above the peaks where avalanches roar.
Jungfrau, I know a heart as proud as thine,
And clothed like thee, in robe without a stain,
More nigh to God than thou art to the sky;
That, like thee, sings to Heaven her glad refrain.
Be in no wise amazed, O towering height,
If on the day when first I saw thy crest,
I had believed the goal was too sublime,
To conquer thee too perilous behest.

1829.

VENICE

In Venice the red,
Never a boat that's sped,
No fisher on the mere,
No lantern near.

Seated alone on shore,
The Lion grand lifts o'er
Horizon without flaw,
His bronzed paw.

Around him, ranged in groups,
Great vessels and shallops,
Like herons all adoze
In silent rows,

On smoking waves reclined;
And o'er the mist entwined,
Their standards, hovering
In airy ring.

The moon that groweth pale,
Her fading brow doth veil,
A cloud all starry lined
Half hidd'n behind.

The lady abbess, so,
Of Sainte Croix folds low

VENICE

Her cape of vast contour
Her surplice o'er.

Palace of olden time,
And porticoes sublime,
And the broad stairways white
Of ancient knight,

And streets, and bridge of stone,
And statues sad and lone,
And gulf that onward glides
In rippling tides,

The guards in midnight hour
With halberds on the tower,
And arsenal turrets steep,
Their watches keep.

Ah, more than one sweet maid
'Neath light of moon, hath stayed,
Some boyish flow'ret dear,
With listening ear.

More than one hurrying lass,
Ere leaving, at her glass
The mask of jet doth tie,
For the ball's nigh.

On couch of balmy scent,
La Vanina, outspent,
Still fast her lover keeps,
And sweetly sleeps,

And Narcissa, the bold,
In her gondola's hold,
Forgets herself till day,
Feasting away.

And who, o'er Italy,
Breeds not frivolity?
Who keeps not for love's ways
His fairest days?

Leave antique horologe,
On palace of old doge,
Of weary nights to count
The dull amount.

Better to count, ma belle,
On thy lips that rebel,
So many kisses given . . .
Or forgiven.

Better thy charms repeat,
Better, the tear-drops sweet,
That love's voluptuous sighs
Have cost our eyes.

1828.

TO ULRIC GUTTINGER

Ulric, no eye hath measured the abyss
  Of the deep ocean whose majestic waves,
Foaming, reflecting with an angry hiss
  Where dazzling sunlight the vast billow laves.

Likewise, no eye hath visited the deeps
  Of thy unbounded soul. Ulric, I swear
Thou bearest in thy breast a soul that leaps
  From heaven to hell, from hope to grim
    despair.

But suffer me to gaze compassionate,
  As bends a child above the river deep,
On one so deeply wounded, or relate
  Thy ravishment by woman's kisses sweet.

July, 1829.

SONNET

How I enjoy the winter's chill! The mire
Under the foot, refuses to give way;
When dreams the crow of fields of new-mown hay,
And glows the old château with roaring fire.

The season of the town returns again;
Once more I greet the Louvre and its dome;
All Paris and her smoke, with glad refrain,
Plunge in the social whirl, and be at home.

I love this dull gray sky, the matchless Seine
Gemmed with a thousand lights; Paris, my queen!
Beloved of gods, sits happy and serene.

Oft in thy tender looks I steep my soul;
Thy citizen, I write upon thy roll
My name on thy immortal scroll.

AUGUST, 1829.

BALLAD TO THE MOON.

'Twas in the darkling night,
Above the steeple far
The moon, so bright,
Hung like a glowing star.

Oh, moon! what somber elf
Doth move, on end of string,
Thyself
In planetary swing?

Art thou of heaven the eye?
Thou seest in knavish task
The cherubs fly
Around thy whitish mask?

Naught art thou but a ball?
Or lizard fat, that begs
To crawl
Without his arms or legs?

A horologe that rolls
A timepiece whose dread knell
That doles
The hour to souls of hell?

Upon thy brow so cold,
Did they, this night, reply
How old
Is their eternity?

What worm gnaws thee away
When thy diminished face
Doth day by day
Make increasing grimace?

Who clipped a piece from thee
But lately? Or didst thou
Angrily
Dash on a tree thy brow?

Pale and drawn at morn,
Right on my window-pane
Thy horn
Stretched its pale curve of flame.

Away, moon almost dead,
For Phœbus the gold illumined,
Blood red,
Is in the sea intombed.

Bereft of former grace
And now, with wrinkles dressed,
Thy face
Of beauty dispossessed.

Let's hear Diana sing,
Whose white breasts know no fear,
Chasing
Some early morning deer!

Let's see, beneath the tree
With boughs bedight with fruits,
Diana, flee
With stag-hounds, glorious brutes!

Suspicious, the black doe
Perched on a hanging crag,
Hears the grim foe
The hounds cry for her stag.

And following their game
Wherever it may stray,
To capture same,
The dogs have gone away.

Phœbus, Apollo's twin,
Seen in the breeze at eve,
Alarmed for him
At night, sinks in the wave!

Phœbus, who at night's close
Is sung by shepherd's lips,
Has pose
Of bird that fluttering sips.

Moon, in our memory,
With thy sublime amour
Fond story
Will deck thee evermore.

And evermore made young,
A wanderer shalt thou be
Still sung,
Both full, and wasted, thee.

The shepherd thee shall woo,
Lonely, while at thy face,
So white and true,
His dog howls in disgrace.

The pilot thee shall woo
When far afloat at sea,
The surges blue
Beneath the light of thee.

A little maid, in haste,
Passing the hedges green
Has raced,
Humming her little tune.

Like bear held with a chain
Ever, beneath thy rays
The main,
The swelling ocean, raves.

And though it blow or snow,
Each evening, all alone,
I sit below
Here on a mossy stone,

To see at darkling night
Above the steeple far
The moon so bright
Hung like a glowing star.

Haply, when steals away
Some husband recreant,
Astray,
Thou smilest like a saint.

Although lamenting keen
To happy groom, while she,
His queen,
Gives up her nest's soft key.

His foot in slipper clad,
Then promptly hies the spouse,
Right glad
The candle flame to douse.

By hymen all deflowered,
The bride now shakes with dread
Tho' embowered
She trembles in her bed.

But monsieur, without shame,
Repeats his fond embrace.
Madame
To cry begins apace.

" Then," said the spouse, " my work
Is not to blame to-night.
I'm no erotic Turk;
You hold yourself not right."

And briskly doth he haste
His fervent hopes to win,
Like the unchaste
Committing of a sin.

Still, in the darkling night,
The moon beholds, so still,
The sight
Where love enjoys its fill.

1829.

TO MADAME MENESSIER, WHO HAD SET TO MUSIC SOME WORDS OF THE AUTHOR

HAPPY is he, madame, who cherishes the thought,
Let it of pleasure be, or dolor, or of love,
That most resembles thine with sympathy unbought,
And thus, as soul to soul, a happy comrade prove.

I dreamt a song one night, and straightway seeking rest,
Waited, as pilgrim might, on some enchanted shore,
Then rose thy voice so sweet in music that possessed
My words in sweeter tones than I had heard before.

What matters fortune's fret? I never can forget
That from thy ruby lips my song hath flown away.

Just as a joyous bird from dawn to sweet sunset
Sings in its dulcet tones the long sweet summer day,
Your lips have sung my song, in tones almost divine,
Thy music will for aye my poorer words outshine.

November, 1831.

TO PEPA

Pepa, when the night is come,
  When your mother says adieu,
Half undressed within your room
  When you kneel on the prie-dieu;

In that hour the soul distressed
  Yields to words of pious book,
Just before you take your rest,
  Underneath your bed you look.

When light slumber through the home
  Falls on all, a benison,
O Pepita, charming, come,
  Tell me what you're thinking on.

Dreaming sweet of heroine,
  In some saddening love romance?
Or of hope you would divine
  Mocking real things perchance.

Mountains laboring that bring
  Mice alone in lion's lair,
Lovers in the land of spring,
  Bonbons, or a husband fair?

Or of tender tête-à-tête,
  Or of hearts like yours untaught;
Gowns, it may be—dancing fête?
  Perhaps of me; perhaps of naught.

1831.

THE ANDALUSIAN

In Barcelona, have you seen
My stately Andalusian queen?
Pale in her lovely Spanish dress,
My mistress she, my lioness!
Of Amaegui, the marchioness.

I've seen the tear-drop in her eye,
When singing songs that made her cry.
When with the breeze her curtain shook,
Right often sentinel I've played,
Right often have I drawn the blade.

Her great dark eyes where glory swims,
Her body lithe, her perfect limbs;
She's mine, mine only in the world.
Her hair, in which her head is furled,
In all these charms my soul is hurled.

Mine are her breasts that heave and fall,
When sleeps she near the golden wall;
Her Spanish skirt about her hip,
Her snowy arm, her honeyed lip,
Her dainty feet that sweetly trip!

True, Lord! how that her eye doth snap,
When rising from her morning nap,

Would you but her mantilla feel,
By every saint that's in Castile,
Beneath her blow your bones would reel.

When fierce disorder's in the air,
Then down she falls, her breasts all bare,
So passionate, and shining white;
Then raging kisses fondly bite.
Ah me, how mad in her delight!

When blithely singing in the morn,
She cares not if her dress be torn
When wrestling in her silken pride,
She makes against her curving side,
Her corset's seam rip open wide!

She waits for me each summer eve;
She loves me, you may well believe.
To-night, again, new ambuscades.
To-night, again, new serenades,
To drive to Hades the alcades!

SONG

I SAID unto my heart: To give me peace,
Is but to love one mistress to distress.
For seest thou not that changing without cease,
Loses in sighs the hours of happiness?

My heart replied: To make thy joy increase,
'Tis not enough one mistress thy repast;
Dost thou not see that changing without cease
Renders more sweet the pleasures of the past?

Oh, wayward heart, I said, a sure decrease
Of pleasure follows idle restlessness.
Dost thou not see that changing without cease
At every step one meets with more distress?

My heart replied: 'Tis to assure surcease
Of sorrow, to make pleasure doubly last.
Dost thou not see that changing without cease
Will make more sweet the sorrows of the past?

1831.

TO LAURA

If thou didst love me not, tell me, demented girl,
What wert thou whispering of during those fatal hours?
Didst urge along thy tongue, shaking thy wrathful curl,
Ah, what could mean those tears, that fell in copious showers?

Ah, if desire alone those soft sighs drew from thee,
If it had been but this, which, in that moment sad,
Did set my lips on fire, didst fan so lovingly
The ardent flame of love that made our souls so glad;

Spirit and sense were there, kisses and blinding tears,
Holding each other's hand, my lips had touched thy heart.
Yes, in that sacred hour that banished every fear,
Desire profaned thy love, from thee Love stood apart.

Ah, Laurette! ah, Laurette! thou idol of my life,
If but the demon lust has made thy body hot,
Lacking the spirit's love, thou art no faithful wife.
Why hast thou summoned lust, if thou didst love me not?

1832.

TO MY FRIEND ALFRED T.

Sole in a thousand, Alfred, in my days of woe,
Loyal to me you stood when so many disappeared;
Happiness was to me only a passing show,
But in adversity the real friend appeared.

So likewise the gay flowers, the fertile banks upon,
Spread out beneath the sun their common treasure store,
But in the gloomy pit beneath some barren stone,
Seeking a vein of gold, the miner doth explore.

'Tis likewise that the seas, calm and of tempest free,
Can lull the voyager upon a sleeping main.
But 'tis the northern wind, the hurricane-tossed sea,
Which casts upon the shore a pearl for fishermen.

Now, God preserve me! Whither? Eh, what shall it be?
Whatever be my fate, I say, as Byron said:

" The ocean may complain, it has to carry me.
If down my vessel goes, but one more soul is dead."

But, brother, at the least, 'twas given me to survive
My mourning, and to seal our loyal friendship true;
To-morrow though I die, to-morrow though I live,
So long as beats my heart, I'll give the half to you.

May, 1832.

TO MY FRIEND B.

You used to strike your brow in reading Lamartine,
And like a gambler, Edouard, that soul of thine
Shivered and burned within—the lightning flash divine,
Within your breast,
Far in the lonesome night brought deep unrest.

Ah, burn, O splendid heart! 'tis there that genius lies;
'Tis there that pity dwells, there suffering replies;
'Tis there is that proud rock that fronts the stormy skies
Whence waves of harmony,
When Moses draweth near, shall rush away.

I know that in your soul deep passion always dwells,
And the volcanic surge of feeling swift rebels
Against dull duties that to soaring flight impels.
You feel your wings,
Your soul is but a bird that flying sings.

Then wearied you will learn how dear is idleness;
Longing for home again will bring you deep
distress;
Edouard, while your heart is free of care's caress,
Replete with youth,
Crave not life's cares; they'll come too soon in
sooth.

1832.

TO JULIA.

I'm asked why in the light of day
I go star-gazing by the way;
A heedless youth, the people say;
Youth is passed in idleness,
And in the years of love's duress
Were wakeful nights of deep distress.

Ah, Julia, what a happy tale!
The mad nights which have made thee pale,
Tell me that love can never fail.
Thy sweet breath, and the ruby mouth
For which my lips have endless drouth,
Thy dark eyes of the burning south.

Ah, Julia, hast thou wine of Spain,
That your soul should face in twain?
Drinking, we shall be one again.
Thus being as 'twere made whole,
Let us invent some foolish rôle
To lose ourselves both flesh and soul.

'Tis said my wild oats are unspent,
My limbs are still impenitent
Even if all my force is spent.
No more am I a worthless nag,
For shipment to some barren crag,
To die beneath a foreign flag.

Ah, Julia, thou shouldst die of shock
To see the mob thy lover mock,
Chained like Prometheus on his rock.
Since 'tis by thee that I expire,
Heap up the flame of love's fierce fire,
That I may mount my funeral pyre.

MARCH, 1832.

MADAME LA MARQUISE

You know that I a mistress keep,
A Spanish girl with roguish smile;
When on my heart, in slumber deep,
She sleeps, I do not think of guile.

And when her arm encircles me,
Like graceful neck of a snowy swan,
I sink in sleep so happily,
And dream of love from dark till dawn.

Gay cherubs, watch where she doth lie!
Protect our peaceful birdlings;
Gild her sweet sleep, till night doth die,
With light of your reflected wings!

All things invite us to forget
All care and sorrow, pain and fright,
Our pleasures, to avoid life's fret,
Our curtains, to forget daylight.

Put thy breath in my mouth, my pride,
That thy sweet soul may enter there.
Oh, let us thus remain, my bride,
Until we breathe our final prayer!

Let us remain! Perhaps the star*
That flames in heaven, which wise men fear,
May burn the world while flying far,
Yet leave us unmolested here.

Oh, come into my wounded soul,
Still bleeding from a ghastly smart!
Come, of thy sweetness give me dole,
Ever to love and never part.

Oh, could you know how much I've wept,
How much my heart has been consumed,
How many a vigil I have kept
To keep the lamp of love relumed!

Then give to me a fond embrace,
My beauteous mistress, passing fair!
Assuage my soul with smiling face,
And bind my grief with raven hair.

Darling, the past is all forgiven;
Now let us sleep, one heart, one soul;
To hold you in my arms is heaven!
This lovely couch is love's own goal!

Know, Madame la Marquise, the king
Hath ordered it that you be mine.
Fear not but I'll provide the ring
That by to-morrow will be thine.

* At that time (1832) there was much talk about a comet.

Then on my heart in slumber sweet
I'll cradle you till morning fair;
My Andalusian, as 'tis meet,
Will with her eye my soul ensnare.

1829.

TO JUANA

O Heaven! once more I see madame,
  Of all the loved ones of my soul
The first, yea, the most tender flame;
  A story of the soul's control.
How memory of it can last—
'Twas, I believe, the summer past.

Ah, when I think of it, Marquise,
  The hours we spent in folly's court,
Yea, how we quaffed them to the lees,
  My one-time mistress, life is short.
This winter, by the leafless bough,
Twenty I'll be, and eighteen thou.

Ah, well! my love, let truth express,
  If paled a trifle, thy sweet rose
Still blooms afresh in loveliness.
  Ah me, where Spanish beauty grows,
Were none so pretty, nor so mad,
Nor in the past were e'er so glad.

Those nights of ours, our fallings out;
  Thou gavest me, I do recall,
Thy golden necklace in a pout,
  To make thy peace at duty's call.

From sleep I'd waken, O my dove,
To kiss thy talisman of love!

And lo, thy grim duenna damned!
How on a day she lost her breath
With hell and fury, as she scanned
When you were like to bring to death
Thy jealous spouse, so corpulent,
And thy young lover with content!

Ah, have a care of it, Marquise!
Such love as that, say what you will,
Shall one day once again displease
Those jailers that surround thee still.
If thou hast once a heart enclosed,
For others' love are indisposed.

But why recall that voyage sweet?
How struggle with a stormy sea
Whose tide refuses to repeat
That perfumed cruise of thee and me?
Adieu, my life—adieu, madame!
So goes the world since love grew tame.

'Tis time that carries on his wing
The hours of idleness and yoke;
The swallow and the days of spring
All vanish in the air like smoke.
Ah, how I loved thee so before,
And thou remembering it no more!

1831.

OCTAVE

A Fragment

Neither the dreaming monk, nor charlatan,
Surmised the reason Mariette was wan;
So stricken to the heart, this guilty one
Is ill at ease. She loves, and fate hath won.
Oh, see beneath the hands of lustful man
How perishes the youthful courtesan!
But now the day of reckoning has come,
And Mariette with misery is dumb.
I have no pity for the strange complaint
That stretches her beneath the trees, so faint,
Where in the densest shade, beside cool stones,
She makes complaint with ever piteous moans.
But yesterday, in this sequestered glade,
How pale her lovers grew in deadly shade;
For here she daily plied a dreadful trade,
On youth and beauty planned an ambuscade.
This Messalina, with devouring charms,
Made young men aged in her greedy arms;
Nor strange that in so beautiful a spot
They found grim death in her embraces hot;
While she herself was fired with passion mad
To suck their blood, gain all the gold they had.

But now the past is gone, my Mariette;
Now art thou left in silence and regret.
Thy lovers have abandoned thee, grown old;
Thy passions fierce have scarified thy soul;
Thy youth is dead in thee, but love burns yet
For one who will not mount thy parapet.

Now henceforth haunt the crowded public square;
Go, pull their cloaks, thy lovers everywhere;
They who have built a palace proud for thee,
They'll send their men to thee in mockery.
To cure thy plaint, the doctor draws away;
He heaves a sigh while pocketing his pay.
The dullard monk, judicially intent,
Denounces guilt, consoles the innocent;
When to confession a fair lady comes,
Is puzzled to pass sentence, twirls his thumbs,
But to be sure of giving rest, or ruth,
With mouth all quivering, he quotes her both.

Laughing at love, scorner of all that's good,
Creature superb, a huntress mad for blood,
Feeding on flesh, behold, the avenging gods
Will cast thee forth as food unto the dogs!

Under the quiet shade of leafy wood,
Sad with a rankling heart and soul subdued,
Like Magdalene she would for sin atone;
Heaving with burning sobs, she sits alone.
A prime authority in women's wiles
Has said she's tricking you whene'er she smiles.

Suppose she has been weeping through the night,
Her eye maybe is filled with joy and light,
And lips with laughter ripe, and spoken word,
But hide a heart sore smitten by the sword.
How oft the player bears an anguished heart,
When painted is the mask with color smart!
How comes it, when the cheek is blushing red,
The mask itself hides tears of woe instead?
I know that never justice in its train
Gives pleasure fit for gods, without some pain.
If granted me to name what suffering
I'd long to have condemned the vilest thing,
'Tis thou, grim torture of a heart ignored,
Fell poison to consume a soul abhorred.
Who knows the solitary, grim despair,
That one must feel love's contumely to share?
Ah, what a sea of anguish fills the soul
Where death in life prevails in soul, or poll.
Ah, foolish one! what though thy love be hot,
When scorned by one, by all art thou forgot,
Yet it survives in all, pride's savage greed.
The pride which scorns all eyes, though its heart
bleed,
Holds back, even with the knife within its side,
With its despairing hands, its mantle's pride.

Over the waves that lap Venetian walls,
Octave hath sped, mingling in courtly balls,
A puny youth is he, and slight of limb;
No person hitherto took note of him.

One day he sat in gondola propelled,
And Mariette this favored youth beheld.
Then in her soul there leaped a purer flame
Than what before she called by love's sweet name.
Her sullied soul was filled with purest joy
That one day Heaven might send her this sweet boy.
One night an ancient dame met sweet Octave:
"Alas!" said she, "my mistress you can save:
She dies for love of you—oh, hear her call—
Fain would she speak to you this time of all!"
But Octave at these words showed her his face,
Where on his brow joy rioted apace:
"Dying, is Mariette? Certain it is she dies?"
"She can not live an hour," the shrew replies.
"Well, then," was his reply, "I'll send this note,"
And with his dagger's point these words he wrote:
"No man, but woman, I; accursed Mariette,
Dying for me—'tis fair thy sun should set;
At last avenged, I was the fiancée
Of one Balbi, who drowned himself for thee."

1831.

A MORNING SERENADE

Awake, awake, my beauteous one,
My Isabel, and greet the sun!
Thy steed beneath the balcony
Is neighing to the passers-by;
My huntsmen in their sleeves of green
With hooded falcons may be seen.

Horsemen and pages wait for thee,
To bear thee gallant company
In lace or doublet, well arrayed
With velvet caps and plumes displayed,
Leading the horses to and fro,
Cross-bows in hand—a splendid show.

The greyhounds leap upon the grass,
Anxious to try the deep morass;
The strong-limbed dogs are yelping loud—
The bright array will make you proud.
Oh, come, my loving one, arise!
Oh, greet the stirrup, and mine eyes!

Ah, loveliest, beneath the silk,
Thy lovely breast, as white as milk,
Was on thy bed but half revealed;
And all the rest has been concealed

Upon the downy couch of thine
Through the long night, sweet lady mine.

I love to see thy hand's caress
Combing thy beauteous raven tress;
Thy glorious hair, in woven mass,
The dreams of lovers doth surpass,
Coiled in a ball in morning bright,
And loose in ample folds at night.

Oh, come, my dainty lady, come!
For lack of thee the day is dumb.
Thy steed doth paw impatiently;
Thy jester, striving to be gay,
Gives balance to his parasol
T' express the patience in his soul.

Put on thy gaily colored dress,
The fittest one for love's caress;
Mount thy good steed, and we shall flee
Across the plain delightedly.
Where'er we travel, ride, or roam,
There love will make the scene our home.

MADRID

Madrid, thou glory of old Spain,
The scene of many a love campaign,
Thousands of souls are on the rack,
Smitten by eyes of blue and black.
City of lordly promenades,
White city of love's serenades!
Madrid, when to the Sunday fight
The bulls go snorting in affright,
White hands applaud heroic parts,
And scarfs are fluttering like their hearts.
Thy nights hide many stars above,
As long veils hide the eyes we love.

Madrid, forgive if I make game
Of more than one wasp-waisted dame,
Brunette or blonde, with smallest feet,
Who gaily walks thy stately streets.
To make amends, I do adore
A beauty I have known before.

I know one whose duenna kind
Sometimes is amiably blind.
The door's unbarred for me alone—
Ah, how I bless the ancient crone!
No other gallant dare come near
The boudoir of my lady fair.

My Andalusian princess,
My loving one, whom I possess;
My beauteous widow with the veil,
With whom love only can prevail.
Her skin is of a creamy hue,
Gay as a bird, and ever true.

When on my idolizing lips
She lingers, and their honey sips,
How beautiful in her lithe grace,
How radiant her perfect face!
She glides with grace between my arms
A serpent white of endless charms!

Now, if perchance with curious quest,
You ask how comes such proud conquest,
'Twas due to my fine steed, so fleet,
My praise of her mantilla sweet,
Vanilla sweetmeats, and duress
Of her soft hand with love's caress.

SUZON

Happy is he whose heart asks but a heart, and who desires neither an English park, nor a series of operas, nor music by Mozart, nor paintings by Raphael, nor an eclipse of the moon, nor even moonlight, nor scenes from novels, nor their fulfillment.—JEAN PAUL.

THIS story that I write is food for those
Who break the bottle after the first glass—
Those madmen who would break a dainty pipe
In wanton fury when but smoking it.

Two Abbés who were dining with the Pope,
And thereby grew somewhat intoxicate,
After dessert had sought a safe retreat
In the Pope's garden for a quiet talk.
Said Cassius, "Dear Fortunio, I fear
My mistress is a fool—Marquise de B.
Will not in any wise consort with me.
I know not what to do with her; indeed,
Her prudery would bring you to the grave."
"The fault is yours," replied Fortunio;
"If you get nothing from her, that is strange."
Said Cassius, "I have told you but the truth;
For heating marble I have not the art."

Thereupon the friends began to whisper low,
Walked with a quick step beyond the garden wall;
Fortunio saw his friend unto his door,
And looking here and there, whispered and said good-by.
Cassius next morning left his domicile
With trembling step, a vial in his hand,
And the day following his mistress died.

Two years went by, yet the conspiring priests
Were silent when they met in court or street.
Cassius was rarely seen; he hardly laughed,
Drank less, was growing thin. Fortunio,
Well powdered, watchful, well supplied with gold,
In look grew impudent; had shapely form,
Possessing every charm that women love,
Was always near the ladies night and morn,
Rosy and charming, and disposed to air
His graceful manners, his accomplished tones.
These ill-assorted Abbés, for expense,
Lived on the bounty of his Holiness,
At church, at cards, they scarcely spoke a word;
For two long years this silence was preserved.
Cassius grew weaker, went from bad to worse,
To suppers came with badly powdered hair,
His face well rouged, nor were his stockings straight.
One fine spring evening a young lady came

From Paris, gracious, beautifully dressed,
To pay respect unto his Holiness.
Cassius behind her stood immovable,
And there remained, for he was not observed.
The fact is, she had splendid Spanish eyes,
An air of sadness, and a slender foot;
But hardly intellectual was she.
When leaving, Cassius closely followed her,
And saw Fortunio for his carriage call.
Seizing him forcibly, he cried, " Stop! stop!"
They sought a garden bench and sat thereon.
The south winds whistled o'er their heads; the sky
Was dark and Cassius spoke with furious voice:
" There was a time," said he, " when I believed
That every woman merited contempt.
You laughed, and answered me, ' Despise thyself!'
Vainly I strove to find in woman's soul
True love and happiness, but what I found
Was what I made—the instrument of lust—
And then expected love. I struck the chord
Too rudely, and expected music sweet.
' 'Tis not a chord, my friend, 'tis but a note,'
Saidst thou to me: ' Destroy the instrument . . .'
As known in hell, I followed thy advice,
A philter of fell poison concentrate
Thou gavest me, for her the foul reward
For pale, sad love; and drop by drop it wrought
A fierce convulsion in her body soft.

I smote a statue, and the woman saw,
And in my arms one night she yielded life.
Fortunio, thou hast committed crime;
That little vial in thy hand was death;
Thou madest me the assassin of a soul."
" And what wilt thou? " said the other; " with
these words
I must away; thou must make greater haste."
" Hast thou," said Cassius, " any poison left? "
" Much as thou mayest require—the box is full,"
Replied Fortunio. " Then," continued Cassius,
" Listen: that woman vile had borne the name
That was not hers, and secret lovers had.
I did but crush whatever sap remained
In heart o' the fruit. I'll crush another heart
That blooms for me alone, that after me
Can not be oped again. I want another life,
And I will add my own unto the pact."

" Thy wish
Answered Fortunio, " pleases me full well;
But tell me, Cassius, more explicitly,
Who is thy maiden? Thou must have her fair;
If not, the trick is silly and half worth.
Besides, I do confess your project strange,
Which might astonish some one more precise,
Has through my head at evening sometimes
passed:
It quite agrees with humor of the times.
For when a man feels weary of his load,

Dragging his ball in prison, here below,
What matters mode of exit from his pain?
I like what thou art telling me as much
As one may some fine evening take his snuff
From opium cask, or from his powder-horn."

"Ah, well," said Cassius, "let's from hence away!"
And with slow steps they both regained the street.

"But," said Fortunio, "thy fair one's name?"
"Let us advance," said Cassius. "See that statue there;
Seest thou that half-oped portico? Her house
Is back of it; and she is called Suzon."

And now the Abbés swiftly crossed the town;
And at Fortunio's home Cassius grew pale,
While at his drawer the other tranquilly
Brought forth the drug, prepared it skilfully.
"When," said Fortunio, "did you know this dame?
Was this in France? How else does she you love?
The second time I saw her 'tis to-night."
And Cassius replied, "I have seen her once."
"Ah, then, why use this deadly drug so soon?
And how administer with sure success?"
"I've bribed her lackeys. We've decided thus:
To-morrow Suzon takes it, in her tea.

Should I be crushed by livid thunderbolt,
We'll see who laughs, when her deserted home
As by mistake is found at eve with open door."
"What do you say?" inquired Fortunio;
"Abuse where you're not loved! The casket steal
Without its riches! Ah, 'tis infamous!
Wilt thou with poison insensate lay low
And leave her naked in the open street,
A prey unto the dog that passes by?
And do you, Cassius, hope to be that dog?
And will you hurl, as from the spheres of light,
The virtue of a child, who for support
Has faith in Heaven and for the earth her arms,
To foully roll with her one night in mire,
And quench forever on an angel's lips
The thirst of love? Oh, execrable fiend,
Is it for end like this her mother passed
So many anxious days and sleepless nights?
That she, herself, to-night at bedside prayed,
That she has closed her door to guard
The locked-up treasure of her maiden love,
A modest flower in a cup of gold?
When I advised you should a woman slay,
It was because she loved you—there at least
Was happiness. Oh! stifle not your flame
Under dead ashes, but as diver seek
That pearl which slumbers in her heart of gold."
"And how?" said Cassius; "in what winning way

Make her to love me? Shall I kiss her foot,
And bind my wheel to the eternal rut—
Become her shadow? Ah, mordieu! too long
And difficult the effort, love to please.
Besides, may I not please her. Doubtful chance;
But she will love more quickly in my arms,
When death is panderer between."

"I see you know not," said Fortunio,
"The greatest means of all." "And what is that?"
"Why, magnetism is your surest force."
"Bah!" said Cassius. "With your atheism,
How can you believe in it! But as for me,
I've faith in nothing that I do not see."
"Ah!" said the other, "that is dogma false:
Your logic is, believe but what you see;
And the blind man—what, then, shall he believe?
Because that in your prison-house of clay
One or two windows to look out are made;
Because but half of streaming ray of light
From the sun fallen, may enter either eye,
If not barred out by smallest grain of dust,
You think the universe will enter in!
My friend, a world incessantly revolves
Around us, in us, that we see nought of.
A veiled specter which creates and kills
A guardian angel and a masked headsman.
And do you know, when you a maiden touch,
What changes in her? have you seen the force

That makes you quiver when her eye takes fire?
The eagle, flying on the ocean's edge,
Calls to his mate with but a glance of eye
To follow him, and straightway she pursues.
You, a confessor, you, a priest of Rome,
Believe a word or gesture is in vain!
Unhappy one! perchance you know not that
Religion is a gesture, and the priest
Who, host in hand, his arms raised over us,
A holy magnetizer, whom one kneeling hears.
Your God is foolish reason, you the priest
Who wear the stole, and in the shadow sit,
Of the confessional, and hold in hand
The head of one who calls you father dear,
Who tells you secrets she conceals from all,
And what is done within the holy place,
Appeals to none, not even unto God!
When Christ o'erthrew the many gods of Rome,
He saw what step that man had yet to take
Who would desire the mastery of self.
Better a blinding cave than golden throne.
Faith is that power, my friend, that fearful
force,
That makes the strong man slay his fellow man
Against what will of iron the weak defends.

" When solitary night
With sable mantle settles o'er the earth,
The herder doth invoke the Evil One
To make his neighbor's cow untimely yield

Her young. Your courage you must summon up,
Your love, your blood, and god of human will.
Enter the room wherein Suzon will sleep,
Nor wake her till you cast a spell on her;
Lay your hand gently on her bared breast,
And with the other stroke her flowing hair;
Press on her heart, and tell her that you will.
Say ' You must love me under pain of death,'
And when she wakes she will remember it.
Then wound her somewhere to obtain her blood,
And wound yourself to mix her blood with yours,
No matter where the wound, at cheek, or ear,
It must be that she shivers seeing it.
Then the next day be harsh; your silence keep;
Be firm, but do not let her be afraid;
When night approaches, you begin anew.
Eight days of trial and the prey is yours."
" I will," said Cassius; " your advice is good.
This night she will begin to bear her cross,
And for eight days will bear it, come what will!"

He was mistaken—it but needed three.
On the fourth, Suzon straightway she confessed.
Behind a pillar, hidden in shadow deep,
Cassius o'erheard the avowal of her love.
Thus to Fortunio: " Your o'ershrewd advice
Has borne rich fruit; her door will of itself
Now widely open, for I know she loves."

"Then," said the other, "strike! this evening, strike!"
"This evening?" the excited Cassius said.
"Yes," said Fortunio, "this very night!"

At sundown Cassius saw Fortunio,
And said he, "Come to supper; I have yet a sum
Of forty louis that I may expend.
Another man more wise than I would make
Some beggar rich. Let's to the inn repair."
It was a night so beauteous and benign,
When balmy winds played in the perfumed flowers,
And the night crickets, 'neath the rambler's foot,
Sang in grass lighted by the glowworm's lamp.
The moon arose above the swaying trees
That threw their shadows on the marble walls,
And fell on shining waves of river deep,
And on colossi of the granite gods
That guarded graves in near-by sepulcher.
In smoky corner of a noisome inn
The Abbés on a table crossed their arms.
"And now," cried Cassius, "why not sing a song?"
And at one gulp he drained a bottle full.
"Come, Abbé, give a toast to my Suzon!"
He stood, with rapt eyes on his comrade fixed,
And sang this song as 'twere a serenade:

If Lilla would but promise me
To let me in, when night shall be,
Without a priest we'd wedded be;

I'd leave by window at a leap
When her mother wakes from sleep.

Are we, then, old women dear,
Who ever live in deadly fear
Of hell and devil year by year,
Waiting till their worn-out hearts
Each from a loathsome skin departs.

Now that my poison is set up,
With Lilla I'd sit down to sup.
A man is free to smash his cup,
Yes, by the Holy Father's fat!
When he has drunk of wine like that.

Has Heaven made nature to sign pact with
Death,
Or does it laugh like spirit devilish,
When it beholds a newly opened grave?
Never had midnight wind from starry depths
Wafted so gaily o'er the balcony
The sigh of love to slumbering Suzon,
As when the Abbés, humming their romance,
On the dry heath holding each other's arm,
Strode eagerly to consummate their deed.

Next day all Rome had heard the horrid news
That some unknown had killed the sweet Suzon;
And at her stairway's foot there lay the priest
Fortunio, asleep, and Cassius nowhere found.

A cursing madman since that day, at times,
Will come to sit at drowsy noontide hour

Beside the lazzaroni in the sun;
He whispers, and makes passes over them, and mocks
The motions of a dervish who can hypnotize,
And, wakening them, he strikes them blows.
'Tis Cassius who survives Suzon: his victim sweet,
Who in his murderous arms that night expired!
Who, still alive, too cowardly to die,
Soon, like a homeless dog, will expiate
In gutters foul his miserable deed.

1831.

SECRET THOUGHTS OF RAPHAEL

(A French Gentleman)

FRAGMENT

Critics of incorruptible renown,
Guardians of fame of living and the dead,
Guards of Olympus where the laurel blooms!
Affected and restrained, as pedants are,
Dispensers of good taste, discoverers
Of truth, or bathos, in a simple lay,
The only authorized immortal ones,
Who, with disdainful arm on honest breast,
Or shaking snuff from off your worn-out sleeves,
Have coughed and breathed upon your spectacles,
And settled in your chairs; with careful hands
Have oped the poet's volume and impartially
Have read my simple *Ballad to the Moon.*

Masters divine, where shall I find, alas!
Water to drown myself, or rope to hang,
For having forgotten to write under it:
The public is requested to be good.
A phrase so cheap and simple nowadays,
And which is seen on pillars constantly!
Ah, povero ohime! What was thought

By the fair sex who read the simple lay?
Ah, masters, I can see you knit your brows,
That take the form of accent circumflex.

And you, free-thinkers, when you dine you hold
Council of state, in garrulous converse;
And you, immortal journalists, to find
Wandering lonely, on your antiquated lists,
The name of a subscriber, gives you joy.
Can you repeat the *Pater?* and the sins
Of others, do they find aught favor in your eyes?
How Falstaff would have shaken with delight
On seeing these fools infuriate with champagne,
Bringing a stone to kill a harmless fly!

Hail, youthful champions of a cause grown old,
Smooth-shaven classics, rubicund of face,
Bearded romantics, with blanched visages,
Friends of departed Greeks camped on her shores
To fight the champions of medieval life;
All hail! I've fought in both your warring camps,
By numerous campaigns have become a man;
Veterans, I sit upon my silent drum.
Racine and Shakespeare on my table lie,
And there is Boileau, who has pardoned them.
But then, dear readers, if your learned brains
Have suddenly grown arid on Thénard,
Regenerate scions of immortal France,
Who talk of verse, or of *Nature in Art,*

Youth of the century! intrepid youth!
Say, can you leave the circling *Globe*, or dull
Débats, for me, a child of idleness . . .
If so, then once again my lyre will sing.

Oh, my fair country, France; what outrages
Have I imposed on thy harmonious tongue;
Idiom of love, so sweet that speaking it,
Thy women wear a smile upon their lips;
Thy speech is sweetest manna in the mouth;
From lyre or heart no sweeter honey flows.
Ancestress, nurse, and glorious mother, France!
Wilt thou forgive me? Shall I worthy be
To make the golden harp vibrate again?
No more, fair Paris, shall I undertake
To celebrate the sons of foreign lands!
I shall not leave this soil inviolate
Where, near the palaces, thy Seine reflects,
Thou, Daughter of the West, shall hear me
sing . . .

Reader, I ask if, after having dined,
Is it a human weakness to deplore,
To sleep an hour while waiting for the tea?
We drowse, alas! when newspapers are bare
Of news, or when we try to read
Some pamphlet fatal to insomnia,
Or memoirs of a Prince! Essays on art . . .
O precious books! without you we are lost.
To lay one's forehead on your pages bland,

Soothes like the perfumed drops of opium,
Or eating of the fruit *insomnium!*

For a *quart d'heure* reclining on his chair,
Raphael (my hero) sweetly slept.
Note well, dear reader, and be not displeased,
That he is not a hero of romance.
His arms are crossed; an ample cloak enfolds
His form in all its sweet simplicity;
His body delicate as devotee;
His rosy limbs, soothed by a recent bath;
His hair perfumed with odor *à la rose.*
Languidly the zephyr plays with him.
His growling pug resting on the floor
Proudly supports his crossed and outstretched
feet;
While at his side, 'neath alabaster vase,
Sleeps in the ice his soothing Burgundy,
And there, half-eaten in its china dish,
His pudding breathing with a bluish flame.
Its perfume, mingled with the cigarette,
Rolls round the draperies in azure mist,
And like a dream it slowly disappears.

When games get wearisome, a few cigars
Are means efficient to put time to death.
The soul (if God will that we have a soul!)
Has not assuredly more vivid flame
Than this light sylph that burns within the bowl,
Wherein the punch smiles on its bright tripod;

Grog is as fashionable as wine of France,
And stirs deep gaiety within the heart.
But say, what man, though in Siberia born,
From languid kisses of a frozen pair,
Though under haircloth he had long repressed
The barren sap that filled his sluggish veins;
Though he had fed his childhood on rank meats
And juiceless vegetables without heat;
What man, with triple agency of punch,
And wine, and the cigarro, would not feel
An ardent joy consuming him amain
The dawn of Eden in his anxious dreams? . . .
Oh, queen of heaven, mother of ardent love!
O beauty pale, sweet Aristocracy!
Daughter of wealth . . . Oh, thou whom we
forget,
Whom our poor France loved in her olden days!
Thou, whom of yore, with spear of lightning-rod,
The daring Franklin hurled into the ground,
Where well-protected colonists controlled
Slaves and tobacco, as prime source of wealth;
Thou, who created Paris, and bade Athens
mourn,
And who, under the gory throne imperial,
Put Bonaparte to sleep, as Cæsar slept,
And rumblings of the proletariat!
Thou, in thy springtime, art with roses crowned,
Iphigenia, at the altar dressed,
To fall when stricken by a mortal blow . . .
Hast thou abandoned earth, regained the sky,

And found again, like Cleopatra's pearl,
A fertile spring of passion and of joy,
Which one day in its billows will consume . . .
"Hey! hey! Parbleu!" a voice cried. "Here he is!"
"Come in," said Raphael, "I've had a little snooze!"

1831.

NAMOUNA

An Oriental Tale

FIRST CANTO

I

A woman is like your shadow; run after it, it flees; fly from it, it pursues you.

The sofa on which Hassan was asleep
Was of its kind an admirable thing!
It was of bearskin, shaggy, soft, and deep,
A most luxurious couch for slumbering.
Noble his attitude, yet most sedate;
Naked as Eve ere she the apple ate.

II

What! naked, you will say, and felt no sin?
Naked—and with the second word—oh, shame!
Excuse me, sir, my story I begin,
Just as my hero from his bathing came.
I crave indulgence for him, nay, demand.
Naked was Hassan, naked as your hand.

III

Bare as a silver dish, or convent wall,
Bare as th' academician in his speech.

My lady blushes, says 'tis scandal all!
But, madame, why should you incline to preach,
When breast and leg proclaim a perfect mold
When all is known, a tale by all men told?

IV

She says her feet her carriage-step must press,
Must cross the bridges when the wind is high;
Who sees the foot, the leg may surely guess,
How charming is that foot to roving eye.
I, counting little in the world, repeat,
She loved too well. Are lovers all discreet?

V

What crime is it to set one's self at ease,
When one meets tender love—and it is warm?
Naked in comfort, well the chair agrees!
Believe me, lady, for there is no harm;
You, were you mine, so soon therein should lie;
Your cry, not loud, would break and feebly die.

VI

In the beloved, what can we fondly love?
The silk's soft texture or the tinsel light?
The bracelet's gold, the perfumed comb above?
No, madame, 'tis yourself, more fair and bright
Than costume's weapon; and our joy unvext
To conquer first, to strip off armor next.

VII

Except hypocrisy, naked is all
  In heaven, on earth, and everywhere below;
Children, divinities, the tomb, the pall;
  All hearts, if beautiful, their beauty show.
For this, our comedy, the hero, quite content,
Is naked, madame, so you may consent.

VIII

Prevailing silence, perfect in this tale,
  About his arms, about his ivory feet;
His loss the Naiad wept, green-eyed and pale;
  Deep in the bath were hardly heard to fleet
Deep flowing waters, and with many a stop
Sang the bronze faucets, trickling drop on drop.

IX

The sun was sinking—the September sun,
  Sad month with us, but month without a peer,
For all that gilding orb showers blessings on.
  One foot could touch the chamber-door, and
    here
He lit the opium in the amber bowl,
Liking to sleep, regrets vex not his soul.

X

Although few feet he stood, not tall, but short,
  A man he was, I think, of no small force;

His character he hid, enough his port;
The trade-mark little, but the make was scarce,
Proportions fine, his mother, one had thought,
Shaping him small, had sheer perfection wrought.

XI

Opinionated, indolent he was;
Quite straight, well-groomed, a face of olive hue;
Patrician hands, a haughty look, because
The nerves were firm; black beard and brows, and these
Of alabaster, and superb the eye.
The hair? All word on that my lines deny:

XII

That vanity in Tartar lands they shave;
However, Tartary was not his home.
A renegade, himself to France he gave;
A swindling knight to riches late he clomb,
And flung, as tatters, idly on the sea,
His faith, his title, nay, his family.

XIII

Gay was he, but agreeable to few;
A neighbor to detest, yet comrade firm;
None vainer, graver, found in all the crew;
His frankness was a sham, a very worm.
Blasé, acute, and insincere, a dread—
Forget not, reader, all that serenade.

XIV

Don Juan, he sang beneath the balcony
A woful, melancholy, doleful song
Of love, of sorrow, and of misery;
Not to such wailings do these times belong.
They gaily trip with agile leap and spring,
Caressing words, that rise on love's own wing.

XV

Upon the sweet, perfidious instrument,
A languor, while the mocking notes keep tune
Derisive with the lay on grief intent,
And sneering laugh and jeer the mourning rune.
Now that should give deep pleasure, you believed;
The truth—deception and a love deceived.

XVI

We weep, we laugh, and innocent are we
At once, and guilty, perjured oft, mayhap,
When merely tricked ourselves; and blood you see
All shed with unstained hands. In nature's lap
Are creatures ill and good of mingled mold.
Such Hassan, such the world, the young, the old.

XVII

A fine, good fellow, sure he seemed to be,
So very good, yet overmuch the child.

And when he swore, " I wish," a stone was he!
His coat he changed, and though his mind was mild,
Failed not the last and worst, or best, to do;
Mere water first, to very rock he grew.

XVIII

Fickle are fancies! Strange caprice! He bore
Unusual things with no good grace. A fly
Upon the ground he could not trample o'er;
But if at dinner he should only one espy,
Such folk would suffer, four or five be slain!
Talk now of good men, talk of bad again!

XIX

Assert, withal, in loud, imperious tone,
That I, an author, must the heart explore—
The heart, the human heart for law alone!
Whose human heart? Of one, or many more?
My neighbor's has its frame, its being's stamp;
For me, morbleu! my heart's the guiding lamp!

XX

This life belongs to all; the one I lead,
With all the devil in it, is a life.
" Then," comes the cry, " yourself, naught else we read,
The hero, you; this stage your scene of strife."
Not so, dear reader; one can lend his nose,
The next his heel, a third—a secret will expose!

XXI

" A monster, then, a freak you will display;
You form a child that never father had."
No father! When, like Trissotin, this day
I bore him at my publisher's, egad!
Besides, is *pater est quem nuptiæ* . . . .
Latin I speak, and for forgiveness cry.

XXII

Consult the jurists, modern and antique;
One always is, quoth Bridoison, the son
Of some one. Dark or fair the child, or weak,
Consumptive, dwarfish, palsied, eyes but one—
A fine thing still to have the babe begot.
Mine's not historical, and this no blot.

XXIII

Consider, too, that I have stolen naught
In any library; and while our verse
Is of the Orient, I have not sought
To prate of that. You'll find the tale no worse;
The East is vast and far! Great wonders rise
From memory, and travel dims the eyes.

XXIV

If with my brush, one only stroke, I built
A blue-roofed city or a mosque all white,
A rhyming picture, silver, gold, or gilt,
Illusion of tall minarets so bright,

Horizon far and red to match with sky,
How could you answer, " Sir, in faith, you lie! "

XXV

All this, dear reader, you may bear in mind,
And kindly grant me favor in return.
Eccentric is the hero you will find;
His passion was to be eccentric. Learn
Dear madame, all the truth of angels here!
" Tartuffe, where are they? " Truth he tells, I fear.

XXVI

Hassan is one on whom we ne'er could count,
Nor would I try to make you friendly mates;
His heart an inn where stairways do not mount;
His very friend knows nothing, ne'er relates
A tale about him. Hard, indeed, to write
Of feelings lost beneath the pillows white.

XXVII

No relatives had he, nor courtesan;
No dog, no cat, to talk to or caress;
No bond of union with his fellow man,
No outward source of joy, or bitterness.
To say my hero was a haughty lord,
'Tis too unskilful, really, 'pon my word.

XXVIII

To say that he's mysterious and morose,
Would not be true; in fact it might be worse.

Indeed, by all that's banal or jocose,
Such epithets are but a foolish curse.
Since I'm his father, let me say my prize
Looks like a picture, and has lovely eyes.

XXIX

He neither God nor devil feared. To say
Such words is hazardous, if not untrue.
To say he'll please you would be speaking gay;
If I keep silence 'twill not trouble you.
The only term that will describe the case,
Is, he's original! 'tis no disgrace.

XXX

Would God, to whom is possible each thing,
I might be justified for all I say.
My law is truth, and fictions none I bring.
If Hassan acts unseemly, night or day,
So much the worse for him alone; for, see,
Should Hassan's follies glance and fall on me?

XXXI

However little I be known to men,
You see a hero wholly different.
Now some pretensions I can sure maintain
To conduct delicate in hours I spent
With my own mistress—peaceful hours;
I know not, bear me witness heavenly powers!

XXXII

How such as I could dare to broach the tale,
All full and dark with rank atrocity;
Even now temptations haunt me and assail,
For greater glory; bravely put it by,
And burn the stuff I would, in faith—yes, but
Upon posterity my eyes I put.

XXXIII

Hassan, I said, was born, no doubt, in France.
But how, at twenty, could the boy believe
By what absurd and dull extravagance
That women are but toys; and how conceive,
If one were found and suited to his youth,
If kept a week, was but an age in truth?

XXXIV

This system, you must feel, is quite absurd,
Since when we say we love, most certain 'tis
We also say, forever. Who has heard
That either king or bard considered his
The right to love, to love them but eight days?
But then, our spoiled child, Hassan, merely plays.

XXXV

One day he said: " I know full well my cream
Is always sour, or half the time at least;
The vinegar of centuries, 'twould seem,
And milk, you know, is rare for seasons past.

In love to be a slave's vile chain and log,
Rather than that, I'd be the black man's dog;

XXXVI

"Or die beneath the lash like balky horse,
Than fear a petticoat, and mistress have
Who plays the *rôle* of jailer. What is worse
Than to be known as such a creature's slave,
And suffer her to lead you by a string?
Thrashed by a stick is not so bad a thing.

XXXVII

" The situation known, what to expect
He kens, anoints his back, and learns by use;
By gilded ribbons lives befooled and wrecked!
Milk-sweetened, green the tights, and taut the noose!
About his prison runs a wall so frail,
If he would hang, he finds nor hook nor nail.

XXXVIII

" A climax horrid comes to cap his state:
She may be mild, yet not very polite,
Yet, eight days ended, she will search her pate
Her heart's forgotten nooks, in cunning spite,
To find some lover whom she knew of old,
With soul expansive, leg of perfect mold,

XXXIX

" More sweetness in the soul, in arm more fight! "
My reader I remind, as heretofore,
The hero raves: of shame I'd die, and fright,
If he supposed that what I now outpour
Could fail to grieve me; nay, I feel the shock
When amorous Hassan does his soul unlock.

XL

" The more my talent bideth green and hale,"
Said Hassan, " then the more I cogitate,
If friendship keeps one grain upon the scale.
Hopeful is memory, suffering yet elate,
A fervent child sustained by sister's might.
The mind's eye sees not with the heart's own sight.

XLI

" Distaste is hatred—cause for hate is none;
Then why should any one with me be wroth?
A woman tells you that she weeps alone,
And I, my tears do make me totter, loth
To speak. Unfortunate, I need an arm
To help; to beg forgiveness were a harm.

XLII

" The body I forego, the soul retain.
And yet, we hear that many fair ones now
Exist from whom to part we're doubly fain,
Deprived of all and blighted every vow.

A falsehood infamous, ignoble jest,
Which finds no echo in the goodman's breast."

XLIII

The word of Hassan said in self-defense,
And this, of course, occurred in France, what time
He wore that cap up-tilted in pretense,
Supported by one ear, and then, sublime,
He sees it dancing o'er the mills, a jig.
This reasoning small just fits a brain so big.

XLIV

To treat of love he framed his catechisms
As guides and gilt the sophistry with care,
And yet his nerves could drag him down abysms
Of pleasure which wild paroxysms prepare;
Spasms and inconceivable wild dreams,
In which he mastered tears, and sighs, and screams.

XLV

He trembled slightly, turned extremely pale,
Convulsed his throat, and blasphemies were heard,
Low, incoherent, and of no avail.
No more; his mistress lay quite undisturbed,
While only this she knew: he grasps her arms,
Lies breathless, strengthless, heedless of her charms.

XLVI

Intoxication laughable and vain!
Succeed by tempestuous delight,
With showers of madrigals, again, again,
To coax his fair, although the rhyme's not right.
He turned to honey, sugar and caress,
Grew fit for sacrament and would confess.

XLVII

Then there existed neither secret deep,
Nor confidence that could resist his sway;
All the effusions in the world that leap
And rise to splendor in the light of day,
Care, glory, love, and hope and life unfurled,
Made the confessional a little world.

XLVIII

A great misfortune to the loving heart,
The bond of iron which Dame Nature fits
Between the soul and body lest they part.
I am astounded that our God permits
A Gordian knot for Alexander's ire.
Fling down that iron in the withering fire!

XLIX

Though they be foes, yet hand in hand they go,
As long as our world lasts, and side by side

As move the Roman soldiers on the foe.
" Thou evil dost," one said. " Thy fault," replied
The other. Wretched host, more wretched guest!
A lie, to say what is, is for the best.

L

The proof is, the unanswerable proof,
That this world's bad, is that we breathe therein.
We make a new one for our own behoof
Quite other, strange, absurd, and not akin
To that the only one of genuine worth;
Unfit to last one instant after birth.

LI

Yes, doubt not this that pleasure cheats the boy
Whose soul is drunken with the senses' wine;
Who seeks in kisses timid sensual joy;
Betrayed is she who, like young Elfridé fine,
Drops her heart's key in foaming torrent's rage;
But happy all who tranquilly engage.

LII

Like our old Vizier with the Sultan's child,
To keep 'twixt him and woman, shining sword!
The foulest altars blest if not defiled!
The lazy man is lucky, seems content, restored

If pleasure endeth dull! the courtesan
Beholds no tears upon this smiling man.

LIII

The chasm is deep and very smooth the slope!
Our mistress, whom we love with ardent art,
Plaintive comes in with love's caressing hope,
And whispering, lingers, laying heart to heart.
The man is weak, and grand the woman's might,
Where path of pleasure is, whose torch is bright.

LIV

Poor mortals we! and who so yields his heart,
Sooner or later will lament the deed.
The cup is brimming; he who quaffs will start
Laughter and pity, nor his trembling heed.
So is the world, and knowing danger's deep,
I say in sorrow, better boundless sleep.

LV

A sleep with dreams! And beautiful is life
When dreams divine into its saddened eye
Pour rays enchanting, stilling every strife,
Fresher than dews, the children of the sky.
Like birds that fly above at night, our dreams
Defy, unharmed, reality's dark streams.

LVI

Ah, were it always possible to dream!
But our somnambulist with outstretched hand,

Meets nature's stout, unyielding iron beam,
And beats his head against a brazen band!
Frames coats of armor, proof to any fire!
Feeds love like hunger till all craving tire!

LVII

Manon Lescaut is with the opening scene
So living and so human and so true,
We say we know the portrait—aye, have been
To see her. Heloise is but a view,
A shadow which, we liking, don't believe.
Ye dreamers, tell me, which of us deceive?

LVIII

Why thus parade these specters of the light
Before the curtain as we lie awake,
When here on earth each dream of weary night
Must fade, with all desire fast bound to stake.
An eagle wounded, all his sands are run,
With outspread wings and eyes upon the sun.

LIX

Manon, thou female sphinx, thou siren fair,
Thrice feminine with panniers on thy side;
A Cleopatra, yet more debonair,
Thy book, they say, is but the ashman's pride:
Yet thou art worthy, and Cléomenes
Less beauty shows in all his Venuses.

LX

Even as Tiberges wearies, you amuse;
I love and hate thee, and believe in thee.
What strange perversity! Our life unloose
For gold and pleasure! Life and destiny
In thy least words, mad woman that thou art!
I'd love thee yet, wert thou a living heart!

LXI

Reader, I think I'm in my dotage sere,
For all I say, irrational it seems;
Now when I say a good thing, 'twill be dear;
I've made a hiatus with foolish dreams.
I did intend to be more explicit.
What was I saying? What the devil was it?

LXII

Oh, here it is! That Hassan with a woman
Was most effusive; he'd have all, or nothing.
I must confess, 'tis plain to any sloven,
Where'er the body goes the soul is coming;
The one is smoke, the other a clear flame;
The one is lust, the other a good name.

LXIII

I know not even what was Hassan's creed,
Nor if so bright a soul had e'er confessed,
Nor in what manner, when so full of greed,
His one-time mistresses his soul distressed;

Nor what he thought of them—nor if his grief
Had made him curse their love and friendship brief.

LXIV

But finally, not knowing what to do,
And ill at ease in front of his tall glass,
He read "The Arabian Nights," where sultan's slew
Sultanas daily, and it came to pass,
Enamored of Arabian girls, this man
Became thenceforth a faithful Mussulman.

LXV

On the first of every month a wily Jew
To Hassan brought two maidens sweet as honey;
At end of every month, their duties through,
They got a bath, a breakfast, and some money,
And being clothed, were sent into the street,
And thus their education was complete.

LXVI

Thus lusty Hassan, several times a week,
Gave up his soul to pleasure's rosy bed.
He spoke in French (he could not Turkish speak),
And with strange viands he was comforted.
An old Egyptian was his janitor;
This grim duenna oped and closed the door.

LXVII

Now this may seem most extraordinary,
To feed on virgins almost night and day.
It seems that Hassan, on the contrary,
Believed his life was commonplace, though gay.
Therefore in his belief we let him be;
He wants to sleep, when loving valiantly.

LXVIII

Sleep will not come, for sleep is sometimes coy;
Instead, sweet reverie of soul and sense
Comes with the open eyes, to sleep destroy.
It is the languorous joy of indolence,
That when it leaves you, you will think you slept,
And rise to life, pale as a spare adept.

LXIX

It is the soul's sleep, while the body moves,
Smokes, yawns, and communes with unwearied thought.
One feels himself alive, and yet he loves.
Would speak of loving and of love be taught,
And with small effort he could find the den—
I think some folly has bewitched my pen.

LXX

In the dark hollow of some wild ravine,
A round fat peasant rubs his heavy paunch,

And curling close to sleep, to snore, is seen;
And toward his center all the points will branch.
He turns to ruminate?—to snore away his wine?
Well, sure, whate'er the truth, his state's divine.

LXXI

Go, reader, eastward to the Holy Land;
Beneath your feet some happy men you see,
Old smokers sleeping fast on wall or sand,
Where the Jews' city one time used to be.
These men can die, or live, nor yet complain,
For they are beggars who like gods remain.

LXXII

Seldom they speak, all sitting on the ground,
Naked, in rags, their heads against some steep,
Their pockets empty—nothing, not a sound;
Call you a dog they might, so let them sleep.
Don't crush them; they would ne'er complain, protest;
Despise them not, as good as you at best.

LXXIII

The first point in Mahometanity,
Stupidity is happiness. Now why
Not make that point a rule for Christianity?
Those who deserve are many, I descry,

Who all would happy die, suspecting naught—
Again barbaric phrase—again I'm caught.

LXXIV

They say, Mahometism, I regret;
I had to rise to find my dictionary;
Before I looked, the verse was firmly set;
I turned about, my pen had slipped from me,
And I had trod upon it, and in rage
Blew out the taper and tore up the page.

LXXV

You see, my friend, how far my frankness goes:
My hero naked, I, I'm in my shirt.
I tell you candidly of many woes,
Domestic sorrows. What would I assert?
I really think me like a man accursed;
Æneas and Anchises—I'm the first!

LXXVI

Æneas, out of breath, strode straight along;
His wife was ever loitering, falling back.
"Creusa," said he, "linger not so long!"
She answered, "Wait, I must my garter tack."
"Tie it and tack it. Follow quick, my dear;
My father, old Anchises, fails, I fear."

LXXVII

My reader, this you now must comprehend,
  Anchises is my poem, and my wife Creuse,
Who lingers, is my muse, does not attend,
  Will wander, lose me, heedlessly confuse,
Stopped by pebble, charmed with butterflies.
Shall we arrive, advancing in such wise?

LXXVIII

Æneas, none the less, has need of wife
  Apart from her, a body minus soul;
Anchises old the burden of his life,
  While reddening flames around Troy's ramparts roll.
But if Anchises groans, Creusa lags behind;
He stops to gaze—what man could be more kind?

SECOND CANTO

What is love? The exchange of two fancies and the contact of two epidermes.—CHAMFORT.

I

In truth, though idiot minds may contradict,
  When one is poor, it pleases one to write,
Thereby pass time, with less of interdict
  Than playing cards; thus saving honor bright.
It is a trade, and, after all, no worse than
Kept mistress, lawyer, or a coachman.

II

Verses I love, as the immortal tongue
Of spirit utterance, if blasphemy,
To love them unto madness, said or sung.
They are of earth, a heavenly alchemy;
They come from God to us, by love begot.
The world it hears them, but it speaks them not.

III

You know it well, you who with eager face
Assail with scalpel every living thing;
You take your poet to some secret place,
To hear your soul with his sweet music ring.
Like tracing tears on loved one's billet-doux,
And hear her voice that therein speaks to you.

IV

Ah, yes, it is the heart which speaks and sighs,
Gives meaning to the words the hand will write;
The heart alone gives worth to all we prize;
If we would move, the heart must still indite.
Carving our verses, critics, may you feel
The pleasure they assuredly conceal.

V

What matters their true worth? The Muse is fair
For madmen even, for the very weak.

Would we her power to bless us sure ensnare?
By loving her I do the secret speak.
The poet is in heaven: when lifting you,
He first descends, ere you can mount the blue.

VI

Come now, fall to, unravel distaff skein!
Puff, puff, to swell the frog into an ox!
Before you read and cry, " This I maintain."
The mischief analyze, that best unlocks;
And in the future unbelievers must
Seek well their Christ in ancient libr'ies' dust.

VII

And when was printed book aught else, or more,
Than day-dream told within an instant's flight;
A bird to warble, fly, and swiftly soar;
A rose, we scent its sweetness, far from sight;
A friend we meet for question and reply,
Now listening, talking now, and then good-by?

VIII

To-day for instance, I have ta'en the fit
To rhyme the story which you're now to read.
Shall any scoff with mockery of its wit?
Make it *its* fault when verses lame proceed?
You tell me to my face that Byron is
My model, and know not that Pulchi is.

IX

Read all Italians and behold him steal.
To no one aught belongs, but all to all.
The ignorant, the schoolmasters, may feel
Self-flattery when they run about to bawl
The line which other bards could not invent.
To plant a cabbage shows a mimic bent!

X

Laforet never learned the alphabet;
What lusty knocks his name has always dealt
To busy rabbles who discuss and fret!
Molière discovered how Laforet felt.
Contempt of human kind lay in his grin
At new-born persons shaped the crowd to win.

XI

To him Molière read not the new Alceste.
Had I drawn him, Laforet should have heard.
For epigram and wit he had no zest;
The higher strains celestial had concurred
To thrill his heart; from Molière's heart they came.
The twaddlers get the leavings—such my aim.

XII

Why is it lovers wake all night and day?
Why, then, should poets love their aches and pains?

What would they ask to have for ample pay?
One tear, O Lord, their failing heart sustains;
This is their heaven; their glory, eloquence.
Alike are genius here and love intense.

XIII

Canto the first is done. I have reread,
So ill-explained is all I had to say;
No word I wrote I would indeed have said,
If any plan had shown the pen the way;
Vexation, anger, and disgust will choke
Me: truth is, I have made attempts to joke.

XIV

Two roués live upon this patient earth,
One fierce as Satan, like a viper cold,
Audacious, proud, a mimic from his birth,
A heart scarce throbbing 'neath a bark-like fold.
No human passion seems to palpitate;
Beneath a sober cloak they lie in wait.

XV

Loving himself, defiling without love
His victims, wishing ever to be loved;
Watching his shadow on the dial move;
Seeing his image in the spring unmoved,
A new Narcissus, seeing his cold heart
Mirrored in others' pain and deadly smart.

XVI

His god, himself; all that he does or says
Is adoration to his Ego's shrine.
'Tis to himself he ever sings and prays,
And thinks that others think him half-divine.
He allows the world around himself to move,
Its arbiter, whom none can dare reprove.

XVII

Lawsuits nor scandal do not trouble him;
He throws damp sheet on others' hopes of joy;
The world must humor every passing whim,
And every mistress is a passing toy.
He feeds on virtue, and then calls it " jade ";
Deception and seduction are his trade.

XVIII

None has discovered that small thing, his soul;
He spends his life to hide its inwardness.
He laughs, and weeps, the sands of life unroll
What's left of him, but women in distress,
A costly jewel such as soldiers have,
A wooden cross upon a nameless grave.

XIX

But all is hushed when he appears in state.
Clarissa blushes, and would fain delay.

How handsome and how brilliant! all *en fête,*
  But cruel if he can not have his way.
He'll speak of suicide; show gun or rope.
Clarissa yields to save this misanthrope.

XX

O heartless profligate! O specter double-faced,
  With tiger's jaws and vulture's talons grim!
Feeding on flesh not heretofore disgraced,
  Disdaining those who have no love for him,
Saying to mankind, I will go the pace,
And would be Cæsar, were he not Lovelace!

XXI

Ask him not if he finds happiness.
  He knows it not; he is what he should be.
He dies in silence; not one fond caress
  To bid Godspeed into eternity.
I vow some brutes more tender are withal
Than our Don Juan, this ravenous human jackal!

XXII

Yet in biography this shining star
  Students will study with their burning eyes;
The critic Robertson will have a scar,
  And give his book to children as a prize.
His crimes will blacken many a lurid page,
And burn the hearts of many an after age.

XXIII

Thus this French profligate is still more lewd
  Than the cheap lovers of the poor *quartier*,
Carousing everywhere, to find wine good,
  Using his riches as a golden snare.
Lecturing his father, calling him a fool,
Such is this graduate from Vice's school.

XXIV

Such is his vanity, there's one more great,
  More musical than Mozart ever dreamed,
More handsome than Beau Brummell, on whose pate
  The crown of dandyism brightly gleamed.
Such is the portrait, that he did not finish,
Whom Shakespeare in our day would not diminish.

XXV

The second sits in meadow grasses deep,
  Thoughtful as love, handsome as genius is;
His mistress near him has just gone to sleep;
  Just twenty, his young heart has felt the kiss
Of love—fruit of the tree of life abloom.
Must he, like Christ, while loving, suffer doom?

XXVI

And there he is, bathed in a woman's tears,
  Facing sweet nature fair as he is fair.

Feasting on love, with strange ecstatic fears,
For life and love are fiercely clasping there.
The happy girl, she lives for him alone,
As clings the ivy to supporting stone.

XXVII

There he is asking why his heart replies
With tears to every thought, or fond desire.
Fondling his mistress, to her wish complies,
Warming her heart with love's divinest fire.
He would give gold to those that weep and moan,
For in their happiness he sees his own.

XXVIII

So young and handsome 'neath a sky of fame,
At twenty rich as miser with his hoard,
With heart of hope to win a splendid name,
Beloved by all, an open-hearted lord,
Candid and fresh, his young heart like a flower,
Where'er bestowed, is maiden's richest dower.

XXIX

So is he now; divine what he will be;
What fate can be foretold for fortune's child?
Love swears to be eternal; destiny
May interfere and drive on breakers wild.
But poetry, meantime, in golden rhyme
Sings of his golden hair in tones sublime.

XXX

The palace his; the serf, the champaign wide
Are his; the forest, stream, and mountain blue
Have kept the name while up the echo hied;
The hamlet his, with flock of pallid hue;
The monks, and should he pass that village dim,
An angel, rising, hastes to go with him.

XXXI

Four daughters of a prince repeat his name;
And if for mistress he desired a queen,
Three palaces or more he could then claim;
A Jew turned bald, who had his pleasures seen!
No loss could man detect if he should fling
His harvests to the birds by wayside spring.

XXXII

The man, in taverns, loves the clam'rous din
Of charcoal-burners seated by the stoves;
The dust will blacken beard and brows and skin,
And trembling, eyes with luster spent, he roves,
And rolls beneath the street-lamp's glare,
Cloak torn, face bloody, elbows black or tan.

XXXIII

Behold him jump upon the golden stair,
Some den to seek when boudoir he has left,

To kiss with ardent love some strumpet's hair.
Before Elvira, weeping, heart bereft,
Straining her eyes to see the truant thief,
Has ceased to wave her lamp and handkerchief.

XXXIV

Now catch him, lackey to a chambermaid;
He hides, a shivering lackey, 'neath his frill;
Now watch him, strong, cold, calm, and staid,
Fling down a father in the gutter's chill,
And leave the old man and those stains of blood;
The daughter, stained, becomes a monster's food.

XXXV

What say you then? Perhaps you had believed
The world had dealt some wound—the heart is proud;
That here we have a Lara still deceived,
And that this man, more worthy than the crowd,
Discerned that aspiration all was vain,
And as its hate met hate, disdain, disdain.

XXXVI

Your error, sir. No person ever breathed
That less supposed himself oblivion's prey;
He never knocked but she with smiles was wreathed,
Has never felt inconstancy's full sway,

Has never seen that serpent where he trod,
The long-lived serpent, friendship false to God.

XXXVII

What now? Such as he is, the world's his friend;
He loses not his property or rank;
He sits 'fore God, while all look on, commend;
No one but sees how deep in sin he sank.
His genius known, his famous words they con;
But wait, the fellow bears a name—Don Juan.

XXXVIII

Don Juan, the name resounds within my mouth;
Mysterious name, that takes the universe,
Not understood, but spoken North and South;
The greatest poets oft the name rehearse,
Keep it in mind and meditation late;
Make bird thereof and seem to grow more great.

XXXIX

Absurd am I! What am I doing now?
Was it my turn to speak to them of thee?
Great shade! Canst tell me whence thou comest, and how?
With all their blasphemies and truths you see
Not one but liked thee, and I too could sing,
As good Blondel when rescuing his king.

XL

Oh, who will fling me on thy courser dun?
  Oh, who will lend the enchanted mantle's aid,*
To follow thee and weep, corrupting one!
  Unroll that list with murder foul o'erlaid,
That list of loves so full and yet so bare,
Which thy hand peopled with forgotten fair.

XLI

Three thousand charming names, all feminine!
  Not one thou hast not murmured, shedding tears!
That fire of love consuming, not divine,
  Which at thy death thy veins destroying, sears;
Thy soul, forgotten angel, seeks to rise
On wings too weak to mount unto the skies.

XLII

And yet they loved you, all those silly girls;
  Upon a heart like flint you pressed them then;
The wind which took you thence around them whirls,
  And yet they loved Don Juan, the worst of men,
And planted kisses on this love, a breath
For him this life—for them a wretched death.

* Mephisto and Faust traveling in a magic cloak.

XLIII

But you, vile specter, what did you with them?
Ah, massacre and horror! you loved too,
Expecting ever some fresh sun to gem
New lives when weary nights your love outgrew,
At evening saying, "Now, perchance, 'twill beam"—
Old man, awaiting, watching for day's gleam.

XLIV

Asking of forests, and of seas and plain,
The morning breezes, every hour and place,
The woman of thy soul to still the pain!
Thy earliest wish, a dream, a shadowy face,
And digging through a human hecatomb,
Despairing priest! nor find thy goddess' home.

XLV

And what your meaning? This the world can ask,
Although three hundred years have run the round.
The sphinx with piercing eyes is at the task;
Those eyes can count the time, and earth can sound;
They move, their compass in the sky extends,
But of your meaning no man comprehends.

XLVI

Where then, they ask, that woman all unknown,
Who only could have checked his courser's vein?
She whom he called, who came not, lurked alone?
Where had he found, when lost, and why complain?
What knot of power to bind them fast, and set
His mind so firmly where most men forget?

XLVII

Was there not one, a nobler, finer far
Among the beauties, who in certain way
Possessed some feature of his shadowy star?
Why should he not keep her? Which one, you say?
They all resembled, but 'twas never she;
Don Juan looked on, "She's like"—away was he!

XLVIII

Untired you scour the earth, both tower and town!
The phantom vain, God sent to be with you,
Your foot not yet has gained nor trampled down!
You are no eagle, soaring in the blue,
Unfed, nor like the bolt of thunder loud,
Which strikes not, hiding in its angry cloud.

XLIX

Say, have you slandered this most stupid world,
Which stared at you with its dull, frenzied eyes,
And seen deformity for beauty hurled
Adown the mountain climbing to the skies?
If so, you are forgiven, if e'er you suck
The fruits of grim reality you plucked.

L

The blue-eyed maiden on the ottoman
Fondles you sweetly in her perfumed arms;
From princess to the peasant-girl you ran,
Despised nothing in the way of charms;
Dwelling with courtesans, I heard them tell,
Seeking a diamond in a muddy well.

LI

You ran through Paris, Naples, and Madrid,
Running from palace to the vilest slums,
Despising money, traveling where bid,
To feast on women; eat the juicy plums
That grow upon the branches of desire,
And feel the heat of lust-consuming fire.

LII

Ever you found the hideous truth inwrought
With floral garlands and deep-burning vows;

Everywhere, with the eternal hydra fought,
Of passion, that no breathing space allows.
You see the raging sea beneath your feet,
And think your pearl is there; that it is sweet.

LIII

You died in hope your love, so infinite,
Would leave no trace on earth of tears and blood.
Your barren love fought forces recondite,
Vaster than heaven and no more understood.
You lost your beauty, youth, and genius too,
Seeking th'impossible that nowhere grew.

LIV

One day there came to you a dreadful guest,
And as you grasped his cold, extended hand,
You fell exhausted at your ample feast,
And straightway sought old Charon's grisly strand.
No longer will you raise your brimming cup,
And drink to beauty, for your game is up.

LV

And now, dear reader, you can recognize
Unto what depths unfathomable descend
Those dreamers big with love's, or lust's, emprise.
I'll say one word, and then you'll comprehend;

What Don Juan loved, Hassan would wildly win.
What Don Juan sought, Hassan believed not in.

THIRD CANTO

Where go I? Where am I?—*French Classics.*

I

I swear before high Heaven, my only wish
Was but to tell a story of two loves.
The subject of this tale, my only dish,
To please the reader who likes turtle-doves.
I've let my pen run on, upon his life,
Wishing to capture dreams out of the hero's strife.

II

Here you will recognize my worthy chief,
My wild Byronic ravings on the table,
At once too prosy, rambling, and too brief,
The poem and the plan, the hero and the fable.
But all go wrong, and thus the reader saw
A dish cooked on one side, on t'other, raw.

III

The drama, truly, it is not my bent;
I want to know what figure I'd make there,

And in what manner I might pitch my tent,
When I have seen so many failures, where
Veterans and princes, raised by lofty thought,
Have fallen in failure where they glory sought.

IV

My friends advise me now to end the lay,
To cut the chords of my resounding lyre,
Send Hassan and Namouna to make hay;
But still the story lives, and I'm no liar.
Since in its place I can not write it down,
I'll tell it, and electrify the town.

V

A youthful Mussulman a mania had
Of buying, every month, two girls enslaved.
Three times he would embrace them—this his fad—
Then set them free ere they were more depraved.
Free from all chain, and with a purse well-lined,
Then he'd buy others, as he felt inclined.

VI

Now, then, it happened that a fair young maid
Was stolen at Cadiz from a merchant rich;
Abducted by a pirate, who made trade
In slaves of gentle blood and beauty, which
Would pay the risk of an impeding chase,
And yield high profits in the market-place.

VII

Hassan loved Spanish maidens all his life;
Though this one charmed him greatly, he'd no thought
To take so sweet a maiden as his wife.
He blandly told her that she had been bought
For pleasure only; but he'd set her free,
That she might once more her dear country see.

VIII

She let him do his will, prepared to go;
But the poor girl at heart was wounded sore.
"Why should you banish me, why wound me so?"
Thus, loving him, she did her lord implore:
"Say what the matter is, my heart is thine;
Is your heart nothing, having taken mine?"

IX

She sought the port, in silence sat her down,
Holding her little bag, but could not speak;
But when she felt upon the ocean's crown
The vessel move, the mighty masts to creak,
Her heart grew faint, and at the wild waves' leap,
She lowered her veil and then began to weep.

X

It happened, then, that six young Africans
Entered a market, with their arms in chains;
On silken carpets of the caravans
They lay at ease after their journey's pains.
The crowds surge round to see the cages filled
With bartered flesh, awake or slumber-stilled.

XI

By double chance Hassan appeared in view;
Namouna rose from out that sweltering lair;
"I'm fair," said she unto the grasping Jew,
"Sell me for something dearer, with false hair.
And as I wish not to be recognized,
Paint thou my face, and I'll be doubly prized."

XII

The Jew was gracious, for he painted her,
And even changed her bright but scanty clothes.
"Now sell me," said she, proud as Lucifer,
To think she'd find a rest for all her woes.
Again she shook her chains within the cage,
Hoping that Hassan's soul she would engage.

XIII

She conquers that fell ravisher of hearts;
Hassan redeemed Namouna with his gold.
Then from the golden cage she swift departs;
As Hassan's slave once more has she been sold,

And that sweet night on Hassan's couch she lay,
In recompense for all her misery.

XIV

" Thy flesh is whiter than a Nubian slave,
Thy form more graceful than some women's are;
Thy soul is subtle, from some distant grave
Namouna has arisen like a star.
Art thou that mistress I embraced of yore? "
Said Hassan wildly. " Answer, I implore! "

XV

" I am indeed Namouna," said the girl;
" I loved you, and returned to meet my fate.
I joined the slaves owned by a Jewish churl,
That chance would make me once again thy mate.
Then pardon my disguise, for, loving thee,
I must be thine, or leap into the sea! "

XVI

Hassan was pleased to find his slave again,
And felt indeed that woman has a soul,
Adventurous, subtle, and that turns amain
The destiny he would alone control.
Self-love is poor, and if we love no other,
We bear a loss from which we can't recover.

DECEMBER, 1832.

DON PAEZ

I

> I had been happy, if the general camp,
> Pioneers and all, had tasted her sweet body,
> So I had nothing known.—OTHELLO.

I NEVER liked those prudes, I must confess,
Who would not to the Prado go alone,
Whom a duenna, as they move along,
Follows as muleteer his ambling mule.
They wear their knees and lips in many prayers,
And on the stone more pale, in their distress,
Than if they trod on snake with naked foot,
Or murderer with noose around his neck.
Indeed, these women, living such a life,
Bear hearts bereft of all noble aim—
Have neither heart not entrails. But I swear
Both on my head and bones, and will confess,
They're worth five times as much as intrigantes
Whose time is spent in balls and rendezvous,
Who shrewdly hide in muff a billet-doux,
Who tie a ribbon round a willowy waist,
Or throw a silken ladder from a balcony,
Or follow the imbroglios of wild loves,
That, like mushrooms, grow in a single night;
And yet so charming! 'Tis a madness born

Of two dark eyes and but a slender waist;
A fierce mustache, a waltz or sugar-plum,
But, oh; the bitterness of after-fate,
For in their nets fall many a noble heart.
Better for such that, like a statue cold,
He pressed a marble sweetheart in his arms,
To warm the stone with kisses; better far
To meet a famished wolf in forest wild,
Than be a victim of disordered love.
To prove my statement, I will tell a tale,
And so without preamble will begin.
One day in summer, 'twas in gay Madrid,
If you had strolled in early morning hours
In San Bernardo Square, you would espy
A crimson lattice of a stately house,
And if your brain by curious thought was moved,
You might have gazed therein and seen
A spacious chamber with rich furniture,
Gold candelabras shedding softest light,
Carpets and hangings, decorated walls,
A table with the remnants of a feast thereon,
Wines, many bottles, and a mandolin
That seemed vibrating, for 'twas lately played,
Just like a woman's bosom that vibrates
After the giddy dance. The household slept.
The moon was rising, and its tender light
Gilded the trefoil on the Spanish arms,
Touched the pale velvets of an upper room,
Mingled its silver rays with golden flames

That lit a chamber in whose dull recess
Where on a bed of rose and amber wood,
Had you looked sharply, reader, you could see
A tiny foot thrust out beneath the coverlet.
I grant you, Spain is vast, her women fair,
But you might search her lordly homes in vain,
Cities and villages without success,
To find a foot to match this peerless one.
So small was it, that e'en a child could take
This apparition in its two small hands.
Reader, be not surprised if I should say
The lady who possessed it was more beautiful
Than poets' dreams. She had an oval face,
Sculptured like Venus; with creamy skin,
Two eyes of midnight blackness, raven hair,
An Andalusian body, long and slim,
A radiant countess who was born to love.
The open curtains round the beauty's couch
Revealed her swooning in her lover's arms.
Moist eyes, and arms inert, in her all breathed
Love's languor, fairer made her face appear.
Rolled in her hair were head and heaving breast,
While on her body many a trace of fire,
And purpled cheeks, and dry and parched lips
That pressed each other still with empty kiss,
And big with love her heart, not failing, tired,
Revealed the madness of fierce passion's night.
Near by her, lover's eyes caress and seek
The living eye his tender mistress bends
On him. Ardent his amorous mouth,

And rendered kiss for every bursting sob.
So sped the time, while on the street the light
Of morning, whitening, came to break the gloom,
And sounds were heard from convent-bells swung slow.
The listening youth was up with one swift leap,
Had put his hand on cloak, then on his sword;
Beholding then his beauty drowned in tears,
" Come, dearest, kiss me once, and say good-by! "
" Already! " " Bah! I mean to come, my sweet,
To-morrow, at the stroke of noon. Adieu! "
" Don Paez! she is sure a happy girl,
The gay one for whose side you hasten now."
" You know, you naughty girl, the castle waits.
The gay one waiting is my sentry-turn."
" Then why so early hasten to your round?
Some fearful oath it is that binds you fast! "
" One kiss upon your dainty foot! I go! "—
" One moment, now, a bed of rosewood carved,
And flowers, a mistress in an alcove snug,
All that counts nothing, ah, my cavalier,
Against a sentry-box beside a wall! "—
" How fair that shoulder! Oh, my darling fay!
One more sweet kiss! " " Oh, how I am befooled
By you, a shabby boy! " " My heart, good-by!
And now give up that silly pouting mood.
To-morrow we have holiday. A ride,
A promenade?" " The English mare is sick."

" Good-by, and may the devil take the mare!"
" Don Paez, love, another moment stay!"
" My charmer wants to pick a quarrel now?
Ah, could I touzle all that hair so well
That all to-morrow you would comb in vain!"
" Go! Leave me, wretch!" " Adieu, my love!"
His mantle drawn about his face and mouth,
Away he went. The morn had grown apace.
Along the streets he strode, his golden spurs
Made clattering noise which quickly came and went.
Oh, in that season prime of verdant strength,
When our hot youth, a sturdy, growing tree,
On all throws shadows, road and horizon,
Happy that man whose hand may touch and pat
The neck of some swift stallion, or caress
A doting mistress and her glittering breast.

II

Don Paez, all arméd at the arsenal,
In silence marches out behind the forts;
You see a dot no more. He smokes and smokes
En route from hour to hour; when trumpets sound,
His answer mingles with the challenge wild
Which troopers, coated gray, go shouting round.
Near by, companions warlike, here and there,
Are sleeping, muffled in their mantle folds,
And some at dice, talk loud and brag of love

And wine too much, and many a jest profane
Is heard. Here one, while reeling, tries to tell
Some vicious tale about an honest girl;
Another head on board would hum a tune,
Another lifts the dice with eyes askance,
And with a throw amiss he grits his teeth;
While now, a man back flings his drooping plume,
Talks big and strong with curses, while he pulls
His reddening beard, sharp cut, a crescent shape,
And pouring, wrist a-tremble, drinks and drinks
The king's good health like some fat chorister.
A tallow candle in a corner drips
And totters when the fists and table meet.
Loud are the brawlings and the insults fierce
And bravos greeting wagers made and lost,
When one speaks out, "The king's brave men are you,
Brave volunteers and cavaliers, and I
Pronounce him coward, knave, and traitor thrice
That will not claim, proclaim, and recognize
That in this cursed land, from Burgos south,
The fairest maid is Doña Cazalez,
Of gay Seville, and she my mistress is."
These words, thus spoken, raised a frightful din,
And every convent window shook again.
Not one but bragged of many gallant feats;
Not one but gabbled of a woman's lip;
She had a foot, or else a pair of eyes;
A waist incomparable, or glossy hair.

Don Paez then erect and silent watched
And smiled, for with infatuated heart,
As ne'er could keep his eyelids closed without
His mistress' image seen, black-eyed and fair.
" Messieurs," cried out the first, our red mustache,
" The little Inez has the softest skin
Whereon so far I've rubbed it with this beard!"
" Sir," quoth a neighbor, lowering to a frown,
" You know not Arabella; she is dark
As jet." " And as for me, I can't cite one."
Cried out another, " Three there be." " My boys,"
Said yellow horseman from a bed of hay,
" You break my sleep. My dream was of my girl!"
" And sure, my little bawd," they answered, " who?"
The fellow yawning, says, " Orvado 'tis;
My Juana, she in San Bernardo lives."
Don Paez heard; it was God's hand, we think;
A fever seized him, and he bit his lip.
" Imprudent words let loose, my cavalier!
I say you are a liar in your teeth!
Your Juana of Orvado has one man,
One master. Look on me—you wish to know!"
" There's some mistake, it seems, " the horseman cries.
" Who's wrong? She's mine, this countess who is yours!"

" You," shouted Paez, " stable blunderbuss!
Do you draw sword, or must we ask you to?
She yours, you say, Don Étur; know you not
That like a dog her shadow I pursue?
What I have done, think you it could be done
By that faint courage marked upon your face,
When I am bleeding still with sufferings
Which leave a pallor spread upon my brow? "
" No, no! But yet I say the serenades
And flowers have cost me hundreds of gold coin."
" Brother, thy tongue is fresh and quick at lies."
" My hand also is quick, and rough to feel."
" Then let me feel it. Have a care that mouth
Ope not again, or I may cork it tight
With poniard, traitor, that it may drive back
Hell's foulest falsehoods that will strive to pass."
" Ho! He who prates with all this arrogance
Must, in default of right, maintain his cause.
And when have we the fair one seen? Last night? "
" This morning? "
" Certain your lip
Has not so soon the trace of kisses lost? "
" To you I come to spit them in your face! "
" And here," said Étur, " is a thing unknown,"
As, with the word, he bared and showed his breast.
Don Paez saw upon his heart a lock
Of hair, back folded 'neath the locket's glass;

But when his glance, more terrible and fleet
Than speeding arrow reached that gift of dread,
Swift he recoiled in anguish and in hate,
As in the arena, stung with spears, the bull.
"Young man," he shouted, "have you anywhere
A wife or mother? Do you trust in God?
Swear, by your God, by mother or by wife,
By all you fear, by all your soul may have
Of purity, sincere and generous faith,
An oath, that lock of hair is yours, and yours alone;
That by no theft it's from my mistress taken;
Not found, not cut away in church, at mass!"
"I swear!" he cried, "by pipe and poniard too."
"Then good," he answered, taking him aside.
"Come here, I grant you have a valiant soul;
Valor enough have you to strike the woman down?"
"Brother," said Étur, "thrice enough I have
To give full payment to all broken oaths."
"You see that one of us must die—'tis fate.
Then swear we must that he who lives one hour
And sees the sun to-morrow morning rise,
Shall slay Juana d'Orvado!" "Be it done!"
The horseman cried. "She dies! for truth
Is it, she is the cause of one man's death."
No wish, or talk, or further discourse bent,
He spoke this word and brandished dagger drawn.

As oft in summer, in the grass new-mown,
We see two wolves that stir the drying leaves,
Stop face to face and stand them tooth to tooth,
Rage drives them on, and for the while they turn
In circles moving round, and each the other waits,
Their thin swords quivering near and near,
The rivals scowl with grimly piercing looks,
Meet on the rampart's edge, and crossing blades,
Begin in fury deadliest assault.
A murderous flash oft lightens from the steel,
The while, by gleams of torches flickering,
All stand and watch the uncertain tricks of fate.
They, mute, and gasping onward to their death,
Attack and push, and prompt to parry, thrust,
With taunts as fierce as clashing of the steel.
Hot-blooded Étur slashes right and left,
But Paez, far more cool, keeps parrying,
Even as a cormorant fighting with its wing;
He held himself behind his trusty sword,
The wall a strength, and one could surely say
He found a friend in somber gothic wall,
Where lantern lights fantastic convent stone.
He waits, and Étur, now, with bounding foot,
Like young jaguar he leaps upon his foe.
Then leisurely he touches him, and jeers,
As though to make him leave the parapet.
The fight was long. For more than one lost
thrust,
Another gained its mark and was returned.
Soon from their armor oozed a bloody sweat

From serious wounds, and still the fight went on.
Seeing no chance of respite in the fray,
Don Paez spoke: "Your turn," said he, "has
come,
Brave fellow! and may God your soul forgive.
My thrust, miscarried, was a vicious one;
It was a thrust to break, at single blow,
Both head and neck, had it encountered you."
Étur avoided it, and Don Paez's sword,
Foiled in its purpose, broke upon the soil.
Then suddenly each seized his enemy
Like to embracing of long-parted friends.
Luck and ill-luck! In very hate they clutched,
So tightly gripping that they almost died;
And scarce their hearts could beat in the embrace;
For space they in this grapple needed sore.
Fearful embrace! where either only wished
The opportunity to take a life;
Where each had hoped to force his enemy
Sound his death-rattle, if he rattled too;
Thus straining nerve and muscle, their mouths
foamed
In the death-grapple like enraged beasts.
Fearful embrace! The younger died in it.
He blanched and groaned, hung limp; and it was
thought,
When that they tried to drag him to the door,
They ne'er could sever him from the embrace
Of his antagonist, such was his grasp!
Thus died Étur de Guadassé.

Love, thou world's plague, folly detestable,
Linked to the sensuous by so frail a tie,
And yet to sorrow by a hundred bonds,
If by the wiles of heartless womankind
Thou dost inflame my blood, poison my soul,
As from a wound one plucks the desperate blade,
Rather than be a coward, to suffer it,
I'll pluck thee out, even if I should die.

III

My brother, you may know a certain street
Where stands a home; no doors, neglected, bare,
And near the barriers; no sign of life
But ragamuffins mauling some poor dog;
No panes in garret windows which the wind
Is breaking, while they like cobwebs hang;
The gables crazy where the lizard creeps
To sun himself, no movement more than this.
Even as we often see by marlpit's edge,
Old women spinning at the set of sun,
And feebly shaking threads with callous hands,
They droop, let fall their chin upon their knees;
Even so this house, infirm, worn out by time,
And broken, poor, and rent by very shame,
Hung cowering one eve beside the way.
And there Don Paez on the morrow morn
Betook himself. He climbed the uneven steps,
Where moss and ruinous time had racked the stones.

Within a chamber low, the first he saw,
He looked about him, hesitating, slow.
There is no bed within. A reeking smoke
Alone is proof of life within this den.
Two chests, some stools which loudly creak
Whenever any one dares sit thereon;
Pitchers and pots, and rags a thousand there;
Above the shelf four portraits, hanging vile,
Of faces made to drive old Satan wild.
Don Paez cries, " You woman, where are you? "
And o'er the door a woolen carpet hung;
The daylight pierced it, everywhere in holes;
To pull it from the wall he lifts his arm.

" Come in," replies a harsh and grating voice;
A wretched pallet spread with tatters vile;
A woman, bare her feet, half bare her form,
Was lying horrible and pitiful.
Perhaps she had been beautiful of old.
A forward winter came to smite her down;
Her black hair hung above a swarthy brow;
To tell the truth, she was a courtezan.
You might have seen her once in silken dress,
And all turned round to gaze, when with her bells
La Belisa rode on mule caparisoned.
Then, it was boleros and masquerades;
To-day, grim poverty has conquered her.
The Alcaldes, knowing her abode ill-famed,
Leave her to die beneath her squalid roof.

Here for a few years she had eked out life,
And scarcely can maintain a noisome trade.
She passes for a witch, and people come
To visit her in secret for her spells.
Don Paez hesitates at sight of her.
She lifts her arms to him, makes bare her breast,
Now even heaving for a wild embrace.
Thus she allures him.

Don Paez. Four words only will I speak to you.

Woman. Dost know me? Take this purse, and think.
That which I want from thee is neither tale nor lie.

Belisa. Gold, fine cavalier! I know your wish;
Some girl of France with beautiful blond hair;
I know one.

Don Paez. She'd lose her trouble.
I have love now but for my hate of one.

Belisa. Your hatred? Ah, I understand you now.
Your mistress has been wayward and you'd poison her.

Don Paez. Poison I wanted first. But yet the wound
Made by a dagger is more deep, more sure.

Belisa. My son, your hand is feeble yet; you'll fail
In taking aim. My poison safer is.
Behold how red; it makes one want to taste

How good it is; you'd say it was cognac.
Don Paez. You see, I would not like to see her die
By poison; 'tis too long a suffering.
I'd have to stay two hours and talk to her.
Your poison is the weapon of a dog.
A cat that mangles, killing wantonly
Some helpless rat, as if for pastime sheer;
And then these implements, this bitter death,
This sobbing, gasping hoarse. She is too fair!
One blow would kill.
Belisa. And so of me you ask?
Don Paez. Come, hear me. Are we right to trust these things,
These potions and their virtue?
Belisa. On this board
Lies yon brown flask, wherein you see a leaf.
Touch lips thereto, and you will straightway learn
If tales they tell of philters can be true.
Don Paez. Give it. Unbosom all my soul I will:
This woman, after all, is all my love.
A twig these five years planted in a rock
Holds firmly when we try to tear it thence.
Even so, Belisa, in my heart doth cling
Resisting, wild, impassioned thought of love.
But though that be, the blow must fall, I fear.
I tremble at her eye.
Belisa. So weak at heart?

Don Paez. Thou witch, my love will kiss, and
then will die!
Belisa. One word!
Control yourself, and know how great the pain
To quaff this liquor.
Don Paez. Die men so?
Belisa. At first
Intoxication as of wine you feel;
Your spirits waver, languor creeps into
Your brow, your head hangs heavy, bearing
down,
And every step it falls, or seems to fall;
Your eyes are weary and you sink to sleep—
A leaden slumber, moveless, dreamless trance,
The interval wherein the charm is wrought.
It ceases; then, my son, your vigor quenched,
And you more broken than the oldest man,
More than the withered pines beneath your feet,
Pines driven by north winds into every ditch;
But you will feel your heart to bound with joy,
And angels coming down to walk as friends!
Don Paez. The suffering, is it great before we
die?
Belisa. My son, it is.
Don Paez. Give, give the vial quick!
Belisa. It cometh slowly—death.
Don Paez. Mother, adieu.
He laid the empty vial on the verge,
The balcony's edge; then, overcome, he fell
Upon the marble like a soldier fallen.

" Come," said Belisa, as she drew his form
Away, "and sleep. My arms enfold, and then
To-morrow you shall come to sleep in death."

How beautiful she is by moonbeams' light,
Combing her auburn hair on snowy neck!
Beneath the darksome tresses you might see
A warrior young and crowned with helmet black.
Her veil, unloosing, falls in drooping folds.
How beautiful and how noble! How with mystery,
Anticipation, and the moment nigh,
Send quivering thrills across her naked breast.
She listens. Now, arraying thousand ghosts,
The night, a serpent, wraps the domes around;
Madrid is listening to the mule-bells ring,
And on her sleeping river bright lamps shine.
'Twould seem that, while the noises fainter sound,
The city changed, became a fairies' home,
And all the points of granite on the towers,
Will-o'-the-wisps upon the roof-peaks hung.
Against her lattice the señora leans,
With dreaming brow upon the darkened panes,
And shivers when an echo from the stone
Repeats some foot-beat down the stairway wide.
How bounds a woman's heart! emotion's prey,
When the one thought that whelms her inmost soul
Flies, grows unceasingly, and from her wish
Recoils inconstant as the elusive wave!

Then memory rouses hope's wild, baffling dream,
And happiness expected turns to pain;
In vain the eye would fathom dazzling gulfs,
Like those down which great Alighieri climbs.
Hush! Do you see along that balustrade
A lamp that turns and to the summit climbs?
He halts, puts out the light. A step elate
Resoundeth o'er the stone and nearer draws.
Unlock the door, my fair one. Look, and see
Below the postern pass a dark gray cloak!
Beneath the portal creeps an armed man!
'Tis he, Don Paez! Welcome, my beloved!

Don Paez. I greet you. May the Lord protect and guard!

Juana. So weary, Paez, or I'm ugly grown?
You stand aloof. You kiss me not to-day!

Don Paez. I loved [illegible] of brandy when I dined.

Juana. What ails you, dearest? Why! The door you bar
And bolt. Don Paez is afraid I go?

Don Paez. To enter easy is, harder to leave.

Juana. How pale you are, O Heaven! And why that smile?

Don Paez. An instant since, methought that woman's false,
Betrays her love, Juana, and must have
A heart of that base metal whence are made
Bad coins and crowns they stamp as counterfeit.

"Welcome my beloved."

Then memory rouses hope's wild, baffling dream,
And happiness expected turns to pain;
In vain the eye would fathom dazzling gulfs,
Like those down which great Alighieri climbs.
Hush! Do you see along that balustrade
A lamp that turns and to the summit climbs?
He halts, puts out the light. A step elate
Resoundeth o'er the stone and nearer draws.
Unlock the door, my fair one. Look, and see
Below the postern pass a dark gray cloak!
Beneath the portal creeps an armed man!
'Tis he, Don Paez! Welcome, my beloved!

Don Paez. I greet you. May the Lord protect and guard!

Juana. So weary, Paez, or I'm ugly grown?
You stand aloof. You kiss me not to-day?

Don Paez. I drank a draft of brandy when I dined.

Juana. What ails you, dearest? Why! The door you bar
And bolt. Don Paez is afraid I go?

Don Paez. To enter easy is, harder to leave.

Juana. How pale you are, O Heaven! And why that smile?

Don Paez. An instant since, methought that woman's false,
Betrays her love, Juana, and must have
A heart of that base metal whence are made
Bad coins and crowns they stamp as counterfeit.

Juana. I may presume your evil dreams have
come?
Don Paez. A dream so singular! To tell my
thought
I dreamt that women oft, assuredly,
Do go amiss, mistake wrong man for right.
Juana. Do you forget me, Paez, where we are?
Don Paez. It is a mortal sin to love two men.
Juana. Alas! remember that you speak with
me!
Don Paez. Yes, I remember; yes, by holy faith,
My countess.
Juana. God! What madness strange has come
To smite your brain, my angel well-beloved!
I, your Juana, I am here. That name
You murmured yesterday within these arms!
Our oaths, Paez, our loves were infinite!
Our nights! those radiant nights! No slumber
then!
Our tears, our cries were lost in frenzied joys!
Ten thousand griefs, his memory is dead!
And, as she spoke, her soft and burning hand
Took swift possession of the young man's palm.
He instantly grew pale, and would draw back,
A child benumbed, or one who would be burned.
"Juana," he murmured, "thou hast willed it
so!"
His mouth
Could say no more, already on the couch
They lay entwined, 'mid burning kisses given.

Deep sobs were heaved, as coming from the heart.
Thus buried in their love so passionate,
They were forgetting day, and life, and time.
Like as a pilot on the billowy deep
Forgets the land when gazing at the sky.

But silence! listen. Here is tragedy!
Why that dull sound with cries of anguish shrill?
Where all was peace? Who has surprised them there?
What is their terror? Why those dreadful cries?
Ah, who will ever know? Under a cloud
The moon hath veiled its pure and lovely light.
No other witness had the sight but night,
Which prates not of the secrets of the dark.
Who, then, will know it? For myself, I think
The tomb safe refuge wherein hope expires;
Where for eternity both arms are crossed,
And where the slumberers do not awake.

CHESTNUTS FROM THE FIRE

CHARACTERS

The Abbé Hannibal Desiderio.
Raphael Garuci, *a Nobleman.*
Palforio, *an Innkeeper.*
Camargo, *a Danseuse.*
Laetitia, *her Maid.*
Rose.
Cydalise.
Sailors, Valets, Musicians, Porters, etc.

PROLOGUE

Ladies and gentlemen, a comedy
This is; a moment only 'twill concern.
And may no noise, no thoughtless lady free
At every pretty line make people turn.
The piece, I frankly say, is like Molière;
Who could say, Nay. My groom and portress
these,
Who read the whole, with admiration burn.

My lords, a theme to suit you, if God will;
Two brothers will for one signora pine,
She young and lovely. If an actress fill
The part, less lovely, pardon. Now, the fine
Young cavaliers are rancorous foes
And draw the sword. Fear not these woes.
Killing we understand, but death decline.

But what results the affair might bring,
You are to know unless to hiss you choose.
And no baked apples you will kindly fling
To knock our curtains down, our footlights bruise.
We've done our best, repainted galleries,
And then reflect, illustrious signors,
How young the author, his first step to lose!

Love is the only thing here below which will have no other purchaser than itself. It is the treasure I wish to give, or to hide forever, as did the merchant who, spurning all the gold of the Rialto, and making game of the kings, threw his pearl into the sea, rather than sell it for less than it was worth.—*Schiller.*

Scene I

(*The Sea-shore. A Storm. Lord Raphael, three Sailors. Palforio. A Valet.*)

A Sailor. Help! A man is drowning! Help, Sir Host!
Palforio. What is it? What is it?
The Sailor. A boat is stranded on the coast.
Palforio. A boat, just heaven! God guard it safe from harm!
'Tis that of the Lord Raphael Garuci.
(*From outside.*) Help! help!
The Sailor. There are three of them.
See them struggle in the angry waves!

Palforio. Three! Jesu! Let's run quickly; they will pay
For four, if we save one. Lord Raphael!
None more generous under heaven! (*Exeunt.*)
(*Lord Raphael is brought in by two sailors, a broken guitar in his hand.*)
Raphael. Ouf!
Were not two women seen in yonder sea,
Buffeting the waves?
Second Sailor. Yes, my Lord.
Raphael. They are two good souls.
If you save them you will please me well.
Ouf! (*He faints.*)
Second Sailor. See how he trembles! He will surely die.
Let's carry him in there. (*They carry him into a house.*)
Third Sailor. Jean, do you know
Who tarries in this domicile?
Second Sailor. It's Signora Camargo,
Or by my beard, I die!
Third Sailor. The dancer?
Second Sailor. Yes, truly, 'tis the very same who played
In the Palais d'Amour.
Palforio (*reentering*). My friends, if you are pleased,
I pray you tell me if Lord Raphael's saved!
Third Sailor. I'm glad to say he has been rescued, sir.

Palforio. Say, was his lordship carried to my house?

Third Sailor. No, indeed, sir; he was brought in here.

A Valet (*coming out of the house*). Noble Lord Raphael sends his thanks to all,
And here is something for to drink his health.

Sailors. Long live Lord Raphael Garuci!

Palforio. May God preserve him for his glory sure!
Say, if you please, if our most glorious lord,
Has oped his eyes?

A Valet. Many thanks, good sir, my lord is better now.
Ho, there! Go back! My mistress begs you stop
And let his lordship sleep awhile in peace.

Scene II

(*In the house of Signora Camargo. Raphael lying in an easy chair. Signora Camargo sitting.*)

Camargo. Raphael, confess, your love for me is dead.

Raphael. Why do you say that? I am helpless, now,
Salt as a herring! As a man unfit

To court you. You remember when in Rome,
Last year—
Camargo. Raphael, confess, confess
That you love me no more!
Raphael. There! What kind of mind
Must you have, madame, to suppose that I
Can e'er forget your favors?
Camargo. Is it the real fault of Italy
That its June suns make love inconstant prove?
What strange face was that, so close to yours,
In that wrecked yacht?
Raphael. What, in my yacht?
Camargo. Yes, assuredly.
Raphael. It was, as I suppose,
Laura.
Camargo. No, indeed!
Raphael. Then it was either Cydalise, or Rose.
Does that displease you?
Camargo. Not at all. The half
Of violent love is almost friendship, sir.
Is it not so?
Raphael. I know not. Where do such ideas
grow?
Say, are we going to philosophize?
Camargo. I'm not ill-pleased
To see you, for I wanted your consent
To allow me—
Raphael. Allow you? What?
Camargo. To marry.
Raphael. To marry?

Camargo. Yes.
Raphael. In earnest? On my soul,
I feel delighted. Go, be married, then.
Camargo. You will not be jealous, no, nor even mad?
Raphael. No, indeed;
And of the new groom, may one know the name?
Foscoli, I suppose?
Camargo. Yes, Foscoli himself.
Raphael. Parbleu! I'm charmed; I like the fellow sure;
Good family, and he loves you seeming well.
Camargo. And you forgive me for thus leaving you?
Raphael. With all my heart! Your friendship is most dear.
But, speaking frankly, two years is too long.
What then? The history of the heart! So swift
Comes all, and dies like sound, excepting grief!
And what am I, to tell you this? A brain
Most shallow. Flies the head, then fly the feet,
And ere the feet can come, the head is oft
Aweary, whirling at the wind's caprice!
We must be friends. Good-by to jealousy.
Go, marry. We once more may fancy feel
And love; who knows? If so, join hands anew!
Camargo. Good.
Raphael. By Saint Joseph, you shall have my hand
To go to church and mount into your coach!

Long life to Hymen! This my wedding gift.
(*He kisses her.*)
And I will add to it a souvenir.
Camargo. Your fan, indeed!
Raphael. Yes. Beautiful it is!
As broad almost the quarter of the moon,
Gold-stitched like peacocks, fresh and gay as wing
Of butterfly, inconstant, changing like
A woman. Spangles, too, of silver such
As harlequin. You keep it, and perhaps
'Twill make you think of me; my portrait 'tis.
Camargo. The master's portrait! Malediction! Woe!
By heavens! what shame, derision, is it now!
You stupid fool! The snare has caught you fast
I set for you? Who am I, do you think?
You talk, and yet your forehead still is moist
With yesterday's sweet kisses—what a shame!
Begone, poor brute! you have only one joy.
A madman's thinking, I let slip my prey!
Had I to go barefooted in the street,
I'd go, Garuci, though you'd hide yourself.
And I should make you dread my love as broad
As is the sea! My grave is open, yet
I'll steal behind your back and push you in!
Whoso can lick, can bite; and who can hug,
Can suffocate. The front of furious bulls
Within the ring has but small share
Of such a strength as God gives dying hands.

Oh, I will show, even after years are gone—
Two years of gnashing teeth and sleepless eyes—
A woman stained, dishonored, all for you,
With naught in this world, holding off her death,
But you, your neck to clasp and fondly cling;
She had a love unfathomed; like a twisted blade,
You can not tear it from the heart, you crush
The soul. Shall she be cast aside and lost,
Like some old good-for-nothing shoe?
Raphael. What eyes!
When you warm up like this, how beautiful!
Camargo. Oh, leave me—let me go, or I shall dash
My head against this wall!
Raphael. The wall would hurt you. See this chair, how soft!
And why so many tears? My angel, what
I said in answer, was it then so strange?
I fancied I was pleasing when I spoke.
But—not a word did I believe.
Camargo. Oh, yes!
And yes! Your speech was very frank.
Raphael. You thought so, dear.
You told a tale, and I a story told.
Compose your thoughts. I love you as that day,
When first I saw my beauty, my sole star!
Camargo. My God, forgive him, if deceive he will!
Raphael. Doubt that I love when I behold such eyes? (*He turns the glass.*)

Who made that eye so dark, and made
That body else one drop of milk, my love?
Parbleu! That body, when it breaks away,
I'll wager, passes through the pope's gold ring.
Camargo. Go, see if no one comes.
Raphael (*aside*). Ah! What a bore.
Camargo (*alone*). That can not be. I am deceived, and he
Is merry with me. Ah, my step and look
And speech proclaim my woe! Oh, I am mad!
Raphael (*coming back*). All silent here, and silent, too, without.
Your garden, faith, it is superb.
Camargo. Now hear,
Sure tokens of your love are what I wait.
Raphael. These shall be granted you.
Camargo. I go to-day
To gay Vienna; will you come with me?
Raphael. This evening? That
Is why you needed me to watch?
Camargo. Laetitia! Lafleur! and Pascarel!
Laetitia (*coming in*). Madame!
Camargo. Command the horses for to-night.
(*Exit Laetitia.*)
Raphael. My faith,
Hysterics this must be, I'm sure, madame.
Camargo. You'll come with me, of course?
Raphael. To-night? Vienna? No.
I can not.

Camargo. Then adieu, Garuci! I depart—
I leave you, and—more luck with mistresses!
Raphael. Mistresses, and luck for me? My word
Of honor, never had I one.
Camargo (*out of temper*). And I?
Raphael. Dear heart, do not give way to wrath again!
Camargo. And she—a little time ago? Who were
Those people? Who the woman? You would hide
Some creature, surely. I will go and lash
Her face!
Raphael. So fine, my beauteous Bradamante!
One moment since, you were a charming girl.
Camargo. One moment since, infatuated; now
I'm wise again.
Raphael. A man stirs up your wrath
Who does your bidding. I was by; you bade
Me see if they were coming. I obeyed,
Came back, and for Vienna you depart.
By Christ's cross, tell me, who knows how to act?
Camargo. Of old,
When I said to you, "Go!" 'twas here, this place;
(*Pointing to the bed.*)
You lay there, and you called, for mercy's sake!
I came not; then you begged, and when I came,
Approaching slowly, then your arms were strong
To make me fall upon your heart! Caprice

Became command; each one was justice pure.
You uttered no complaint, and you, you wept!
Your face turned pale, you hotly cried, and called
Me cruel woman! Mistress then, or not?
Raphael (*throwing himself on the bed*). My cruel queen, my angel goddess now!
I wait on you. The lists are broken down.
Dare you to meet me?
Camargo (*in his arms*). Cold is your love! Ah me,
My Raphael loves no more!

Scene III

(*Before the house of Signora Camargo. The Abbé Hannibal Desiderio, stepping from his chair. Musicians, Chairmen.*)

The Abbé. Ho, there, my lusty knaves! is this the house
Where dwells the sweet danseuse?
A Chairman. Right there, my lord, and opposite
Saint Vincent's clock; those curtains, that you see,
Drape her apartment.
The Abbé. Here's for you; thanks.
This evening is propitious, and I think
My ardor may at last find its reward.

The moon will not delay her rising hour;
Nor shall my goddess fail to smile on me.
One of my sort wins favors at the start,
And does not dance attendance at a door;
Nor wait outside to catch a beastly cold.
Now there, you rogues, what will you play for us?
Soft, high, or low, or with an amorous strain?
My ear a dance enjoys! My love demands
A strain in minor key—heigho! I'll hide
Under the outside shutter of her room.
Her bedroom, is it not?
A Chairman. Yes, my lord.
The Abbé. Go slowly, softly,
Now you know the rest. My cruel lot
A kind of martyrdom that ruins me
Follows me everywhere. I pour out gold
For suppers and gay serenades, to please
My goddesses, and why? Pray tell me what
I get for it?
Musicians. Softly, my lord; we'll play a serenade. (*Music.*)
The Abbé. Those tunes are all insipid.
Sing simply " Belle Phyllis," or " Ma Clyméne."
Musicians. My lord, allegro! (*Music.*)
The Abbé. There's nothing there,
At yonder window. H'm! (*Music continues.*)
She is inhuman. Not a sign of life.
Come, hand me your guitar. (*He takes a guitar.*)
Fie! fie upon it! (*He takes another.*)

H'm! I shall sing. These knaves,
I do believe, conspire to injure me
By singing flat. (*He sings.*)

For love to groan in bitter anguish . . .

Hein! mi, mi, la.

For love to groan in bitter anguish . . .

Mi, mi. Good!

For love I groan in bitter anguish,
For thee, Clyméne, I moan;
Oh grant my prayer, my own!
But if not so, no more I'll languish
For love to groan!

What! nothing moves!
What is she, then, to let me wait about!
Têtebleu! we'll see! (*He sings.*)

For so much trouble, lady love . . .

Raphael (*coming out of the house and standing on the door-step*). Ah, ha! Sir Abbé Desiderio,
At the wrong time, parbleu!

The Abbé. Wrong time, sir! Not so wrong. I put you out,
Perhaps?

Raphael. By no means. No, I leave to you the place;
'Tis worth the taking, on my word, and more,
For 'tis quite warm.

The Abbé. Sir, sir, to abuse

The ears of a man, there's no need of an hour;
One word's enough.
Raphael. Pardon me, Abbé, for I thought
Your ears less quick on that point, by the way
Mine own had ta'en your songs.
The Abbé. Body and head, sir! does your shallow pate
Require a lexicon?
Raphael. There, softly, sir! First supper I must have;
I ne'er yet fought without the knowing why,
Nor hungry went to bed.
The Abbé. For one who vaunts so much, my Lord,
I fear you fare but ill. What, then, may you
Be called?
Raphael. I'm called the Lord Purse-emptier; of heads
The breaker; and in English, blockhead;
Likewise the master-killer of abbés,
For Lord Garuci knows his father sleeps
Most usually with his mother.
The Abbé. If there to-morrow night he sleeps, he runs
The risk his wife's a mother without son.
Where are your lodgings, pray?
Raphael. Hotel Blue Dauphin, in the little park.
The Abbé. What is your choice of arms?
Raphael. Pistol, or point, it matters not.

Abbé. What hour is most convenient for the fight?

Raphael. The noontide hour.

(*The Abbé bows, and goes back to his chair.*)

Raphael. That little Abbé seems to me right spry;
He's a good fellow, and must sup with me.
Hey, there, sir, not so fast.

The Abbé. What is it, sir?

Raphael. You people haste as though
A fever in their heels took them from hence.
Stay, for God's love, till I before you lay
An algebraic point. Is't not a fact
That whoso'er of sober mind will see,
After the table's joys, then come the beds,
As after meat the wine; and, moreover,
When two good men, not having met before,
Go forth to face and fight, there's more bad grace
Displayed than when it rains a wench should try
In satin shoes to tiptoe from her carriage.
We'll sup together, then, and, by my faith,
Be more acquainted for to-morrow's work.
What think you, Abbé?

The Abbé. Willingly, Marquis, will I feast with you. (*He rises out of his chair.*)

Raphael. Already the musicians have arrived,
And for the table—Ho, Palforio! (*Knocking.*)
This door to force is harder than a maid.
Palforio, clown, tripeman, bag of guts!

You'll see that now they're fast asleep, the brutes!
(*He throws a stone at the window.*)
Palforio (*at the window*). What's the good pleasure of your courtesy?
Raphael. Prepare a supper, for the hour is choice,
In sooth, to let us in! We'll break your lights!
Wine-bag, be quick! Pardieu! were I as big
As you, I'd ask that I be placed upon
My doorstep, or be carried as a sign,
For then would people know where I'd be found.
Palforio. Most excellent lord, excuse me!
Raphael. Come, now, look sharp!
Stir up your kitchen aids! be quick to act!
Give us thy choicest wine, thy prettiest maid;
Put all upon the spit, thy birds, thy fowls,
Thy calves, thy dogs, thy cats, thy wife, and all.
Abbé, pass on to joy; and then to fight.
Good Lord! we'll strike with our Herculean might.

Scene IV

(*The dressing-room of Signora Camargo. They are putting on her shoes.*)

Camargo. Ay, let him go, and leave me, but fail not
To come and tell me when 'twill be my step.
It is the law, my heart! 'Tis very true
That to the loved soul a woman gives

Her own; if not so, why does she conceive
Desire to return, or fear of losing it?
How different man's heart, like tide
Ebbing from places which most tempted it!
See how the love of one grows ever strong
In woman's breast; the man's love, how it cools!
The one, as when a horse stung in the breast,
Madly against the jav'lin presses hard,
And drives it to his heart until he dies;
The other, when his side begins to gape,
And feels the bite of murderous cold steel,
Flees like a coward, and no longer loves.
Ah, that mine eyes might somewhere else inflame
A wound like unto mine in misery,
Then I would be more harsh, more pitiless,
Than pauper for his dog, after he's said
" For God's sake! " all day long without a sou.
Am I not handsome yet? Is my cheek wan
From three nights' sleeplessness? or my lip pale?
True, God! I am no more Camargo! and
Beneath my rouge it may be I am pale.
But no! I'm charming yet. It is thy love,
That time already shrivels and defames,
False Garuci, and not my face that fades!
A hobbling dwarf no more like Phœbus is,
Than is the conduct of inconstant love
To ways of love all-faithful and secure.
Ah, from this smiling morning now I know
Thy treacherous heart; for thou hast laid it bare.
We dream of easy pleasure for the heart

In peaceful ardor of *la mode* intrigue.
What is it, then? It is a fondled wave
That suddenly engulfs us! fleeting mists
Of smoke caught up and rent by howling winds.
Ill love departs, true love alone remains.
Oh! in deep sorrow, as a winding-sheet,
May he this moment lie asleep! The thoughts
Of man are filled with pleasure that forgets;
A woman lives and dies for love alone;
A year she dreams on what he dwells a day!
Laetitia (*entering*). Madame, they await you for the third scene.
Camargo. Is it la Monateuil who to-night
Will play the queen?
Laetitia. Yes, madame,
And Monsieur de Monateuil, Sylvain.
Camargo. Then send the letter to Hotel Dauphin.

Scene V

(*A sumptuous dining-room. Garuci, seated with the Abbé Hannibal. Musicians.*)

Raphael. Yes, my dear Abbé, that is how, one day,
I came and conquered signorina, in the year
One thousand seven hundred sixty-one,
Of Anno Domine.
The Abbé. Sad victory! Oh, sad in very truth!
Raphael. Sad, Abbé? Yes, you're sad with too much wine.

For Italy, it rhymes with *la folie;*
And as for melancholy, it looks like holes
In stockings, or a bag of rusty pence.
People, who have it, drown themselves for it.
And I'd drown it, in my turn. (*He drinks.*)
The Abbé. And when you had that beauteous
Camargo, then you loved her dearly, eh?
Raphael. Oh, very much! and then, to tell the truth,
I went about it in a proper way.
A silver coin can soften hardest heart.
It was, at first, the sweetest friendship life
From birth to death possesses. Seeing her
Before she rose from bed in early morn,
Or in the evening when the play was o'er,
What folly, our exchange of amorous joys!
Poor angel! she was very pretty. Ah, those days!
After a month's satiety, I ceased
To visit her, them came reproaches, tears.
She moved the heavens to hold me, but I fled,
And thus it was she called me traitor vile.
That was the least offense, and so I quit
Thenceforth, avoiding and forgetting her.
One evening fine, I know not how 'twas done,
The moon was rising brightly in the sky
The wind was mild, the air of Rome was pure;
There was a little grove along a wall,
A little pathway where we walked again,
As formerly.
The Abbé. And so you took your odalisk again!

Raphael (*breaking his glass*). True as this glass is smashed,
My love had cooled, and I had given my life
To serve that lazy god men Fancy call,
Who, sad or gay, full face or spare profile,
Like Punchinello, drags me with a thread;
'Tis he who holds my purse, and gives the rein
To prancing steed, a trifler, jealous, false,
Who hunts at daybreak, Sunday and Friday,
Sleeps on my pillow mostly until noon.
I must obey him, though he's light as smoke,
Catching at trifles, has a craze for days,
And then at last for lovely womankind;
But now, in faith, I have no craze for them.
I have seen so many little princesses!
The first one, truly, ate me up with love;
She kissed, caressed, and tossed me all about;
But all is o'er, for that one spoiled me.
As for Camargo, you may have her now,
If you desire her, but I'd sooner hang,
Than that my hand should even touch her neck.
The Abbé. Sad!
Raphael. You're sad again, Abbé?
(*To the musicians.*)
Hey, monarchs of the bow,
Divert his courtesy a little now! (*Music.*)
My faith, this music it is very fine!
(*He talks while he walks, while the orchestra plays.*)

Poetry,
You see, is good. But music sweeter is,
Pardieu! These tunes are very soulful things.
The throat without a tongue is no avail.
There's Dante's seraphim who never speak.
For me, 'tis music gives me faith in God.
Push on—crescendo! Give your boldest note!
Parbleu!
The Abbé is asleep. He calmly lies
Beneath the table like the devil in his cups.
Sweet sleep! thou healing virtue of the mind,
Watch over him, for to sleep when drunk
Is, having feasted, the first boon in life.
Palforio (*entering*). My lord, a letter by a messenger.
Raphael (*after reading*). May Heaven her soul confound!
Say I will go—and still I can not go.
Parbleu! I will not, and again I must.
Tell her to wait for me. (*Exit Palforio.*)
Raphael. Hey, Abbé! on my soul,
He snores like mad.
The Abbé. Pardon me, madame;
Was I asleep?
Raphael. Hey! do you wish to have Camargo, friend?
You know she is a beauty!
The Abbé (*rising*). Body and head!
This evening, do you say?

Raphael. This very evening. Hear me well:
she will expect
My coming before midnight; 'tis eleven now.
To represent me, you must take my coat
(*The Abbé unbuttons his coat.*)
Ah, give me yours,
(*The Abbé takes off his coat.*)
You will go
Right to her dwelling, to a little door,
Then cough but twice, and wait for a response.
Now let me hear you cough.
The Abbé. H'm! H'm!
Raphael. Admirably done!
We're of the same stature, as it so appears.
Then, let's change coats,
(*They exchange coats.*)
Parbleu! this hypocrite's soutane
Gives me the equivocator's port and style.
The Marquis Hannibal! the Abbé Garuci!
Our trick is splendid. When they let you in,
They'll introduce you softly, but don't go
And lose your head then. Take her in your arms,
But first of all, as though by accident,
Upset the lamp, lest she should see your face.
You'll find the alcove on the right; your love
Says not a word, so likewise answer her.
The Abbé. I'll see this fair one,
Be it life or death; and, Marquis, do you hear,
If e'er my mistress pleases you, what day or
hour

You write me but three words, may I expire
If you do not enjoy her that same night!
(*Exit the Abbé. Raphael calls to him through the window.*)
Abbé, if you wish
To be taken for me quite, bestow a kiss
Upon the maid as you go in. Ho, there, my knaves!
Let some one summon Cydalise.

Scene VI

(*At the house of Signora Camargo. Camargo, the Abbé, Laetitia.*)

Camargo (*entering*). Take off my shoes. I'm choking! Was my note
Delivered?
Laetitia. Yes, madame.
Camargo. What was the answer?
Laetitia. That he would come.
Camargo. Was he alone?
Laetitia. With the Abbé.
Camargo. What is the Abbé called?
Laetitia. His name I know not, but he's short and fat.
Camargo. Laetitia?
Laetitia. Madame?
Camargo. Come nearer. Don't you think I'm very pale?

I'm positively sick, and look so ill;
I'm quite a fright; my hair's not even dressed;
You lace me far too tight; I can not breathe.
Laetitia. Why, madame, you've the sweetest face of all,
And your complexion's lovely.
Camargo. You think so? Raise this curtain. Come and sit
Beside me. Tell me, do you really think
That for a woman 'tis misfortune dire
To love deep down within her burning soul?
Laetitia. 'Tis no misfortune, when the woman's rich!
The Abbé (*in the street*). H'm!
Camargo. Dost thou not hear
Some one who coughs? Yet that is not his step.
Laetitia. Madame, it is his voice. I'll ope the door.
Camargo. Pour me this vial over my shoulder.
(*Signora Camargo is for a moment alone, and silent. Laetitia returns with the Abbé, who is dressed in Garuci's cloak, then immediately retires. The end of the cloak catches on the lamp and it falls.*)
The Abbé (*falling on her neck*). Oh!
(*Signora Camargo is seated; she rises, and goes to the alcove. The Abbé follows in the dark. She turns around, extends her hand to him; he clutches it.*)

Camargo. Help!
Help! It is not he!
(*Both are motionless for an instant.*)
The Abbé. Madame, as I was going by . . .
Camargo. Police! Who is this man?
The Abbé (*putting his handkerchief over her mouth*). Ah, head and blood!
My fine lady, not one word. You're my sweet prisoner.
Scream, if you will. I'll hold you; you must do
Whate'er I say.
Camargo (*suffocating*). Heuh!
The Abbé. Hear me! If you wish
That we should pass an hour at pulling hair,
'Tis as you wish. I am willing, but I swear
You can not profit by it. Rest assured,
If you're complaisant, you will nothing lose.
Madame, keep quiet, in the name of heaven!
You'll wound yourself. I feel to my regret
That I've offended you.
Camargo (*striking him with the clasp of her belt*). You are a wretch,
Assassin! Help!
The Abbé. Madame, be calm,
I pray you. Surely you won't make alarm!
To make the people prattle, gendarmes come?
We are alone, 'tis night, and you are wrong
To think we walk at midnight with no sword.
When you have made me rip a valet up,
Or kill a citizen, am I more kind?

Will not suspicion argue properly,
That, being criminal, my guilt's complete?
Camargo. Who, therefore, are you, you who talk so bold?
The Abbé. 'Pon honor, I was Garuci just now,
But at the present—
Camargo (*leading him to a moonlit window*). Come. Upon
Your life and blood, make answer! Say what means
This cipher?
The Abbé. Forgive me, madame, I am surely mad
With love of you. I know not where I stand.
Ah, do not put on me that mortal wrong
To think this heart the home of such deceit.
I was no more myself. My witness heaven,
That no man labored more to merit you.
Camargo. Believe I can, indeed, you have a brain
Half-clouded. Now this dress, whence came it here?
The Abbé. From him.
Camargo. Him? You've committed murder, then?
The Abbé. He's lively—had a bottle as I left.
Camargo. What game is this we're playing?
The Abbé. Look, couldn't he
Himself alone invent the stratagem?
And see you not that he alone could give

The thing I saw, and surely crown my love?
Who else than he would show your house to me?
Lend me these garments, fix so well the hour?
Camargo. When from my brow shall fall, ah, Raphael,
My hairs beside my feet, one after one;
And when my hands and cheeks shall turn all blue
Like drowned men's; when eyes let eyeballs drop
Amid my tears—then, then you will conclude
That I have suffered richly, and you'll rest.
The Abbé. But—
Camargo. What sort of man he sends to take his place!
What mire is mingled with the water flung
Into my face? Let's see, now, which is writ,
The coward or the blockhead, in your eyes?
The Abbé. Madame!
Camargo. Somewhere I've seen you!
The Abbé. At the Count
Foscoli's?
Camargo. So it was. Were it no shame,
A pity it would be to see you thus,
A misfit clown; my heart it would revolt!
Let's see, what had you drunk, and in these freaks
How much counts drunkenness, and impudence
How much? You I believe, and he alone,
The player, picked you as his instrument.

But listen. This may to your profit turn.
Go, seek and find him; if at table still,
Tell of successes, say when he desires
To lend the Opera ladies to his friends,
You'll thank him for a damsel.
The Abbé. The Opera? You would be much surprised
To hear he's supping now with Cydalise.
Camargo. What! with Cydalise?
The Abbé. Yes, yes. A wager now
We catch the music should the breeze be strong.
(*They listen, and hear in the distance the slow strains of a symphony.*)
Camargo. True! Heavens and earth!
The Abbé. And thus he would forget
With Cydalise, who is not young or fair,
The pearl of these our times! Ah, madame, think,
Your winsome charms are thus insulted, scorned.
Think of the time, the hour, and of my flame!
Believe your kindness . . .
Camargo. Cydalise!
The Abbé. Madame,
Will you not deign to rest your eyes on me?
If absolute devotion . . .
Camargo. You must rise.
Have you aught strength of arm?
The Abbé. I say!
Camargo. Your sword!
The Abbé. Madame, in truth you've cut your hand, I fear.

Camargo. What? Pale before the time, and fainting now?

The Abbé. No, no. Têtebleu! You're thirsting, then, for blood?

Camargo. Abbé, I will have blood. I'm more athirst
Than crows allured by noisome carcasses.
He's there, you say? Run quick and cut his throat,
And drag the man before me by the heels;
Tear out his heart, for fear he may be cured;
Cut him in quarters, wrap in table-cloth,
And bring him here; and may the lightning blast
Me if each wound win not one kiss for you.
You tremble, Roman? Strange mistake to think
That your good angel brought you to this house!
The blood affrights you, but to weave a cloak,
A cardinal's, you need the point of knife.
My heart so big you judged that I could hold
Two loves at once, and neither break away;
Another error. Great, not great enough,
My heart for that. The last love gnaws the first!

The Abbé. But, madame, really, is it? Doubtless 'tis
Assassination—and the law?

Camargo. Now here,
Upon my knees, I do beseech you.

The Abbé. But
To-morrow I can fight. The other can not be;
Wait till to-morrow, madame.

Camargo. If he should die
To-morrow, and I die? And I go mad?
And if the sun, beginning now to pale,
Could never rise above the horizon dark,
For men have seen such nights on earth of old,
To-morrow. Shall I wait, and count the hours
In seconds on fingers, or with living throbs
Of heart-beats, like to a computing Jew,
Counting the interest on a loan nigh due?
In fine, until to-morrow shall I humor thee,
By playing heads or tails, and curb my wrath
At point of pistol trembling in thy hand?
No, hell and fury! for to-day is ours,
To-morrow it is God's!
The Abbé. But think now . . .
Camargo. Hannibal, take me to thine arms!
By Heaven, I love thee!
(*She casts herself on his neck.*)
The Abbé. By all the fiends!
Camargo. My sweet love, I implore
Protection of thee. See, the hour is late.
Wilt thou deny me? Here, this poniard take—
Who will perceive thee passing? All is dark!
The Abbé. He dies, and thou art mine?
Camargo. This night he dies!
The Abbé. Before an hour?
Ah me! I can not walk. My knees are weak.
I totter! . . .
Camargo. Hannibal, I'm ready, and I wait!

Scene VII

(*At the Inn. Raphael is seated with Rose and Cydalise.*)

Raphael (*singing*).

> Trivelin or Scaramose,*
> Fill the bottom of thy cup;
> If thou drink it brimming up,
> I will say thou wip'st thy nose
> With thy toes.

I know not from beneath what pyramid
Of wine in bottles, or in brimming glass,
The demon who can fuddle me can hide;
I still despair of ever finding him.
Cydalise. Your health, my prince!
Raphael. Yours, goddess! Let's drink a toast to Death;
Vive l'amour, by my faith! The devil take
My mistress! Life a rugged highway is.
Be gay, my fellow traveler.
Cydalise. Sing all of you, and I shall dance.
Raphael. Well said, indeed.
Ah, what a pretty leg!
(*He reclines at Rose's feet and preludes.*)
I am Hamlet at Ophelia's knees;
My queen, my folly's milder, and her eyes,
Under black lashes, other gods implore.
(*He sings.*)

* For *Scaramouche.*

If, in the grottoes of old Gnide,
When Venus' arms about him lie,
Should hoary Jupiter decide
To give me immortality,
And all the glory of a god,
And all of pleasure for a nod,
And if such pleasure ne'er could fail;
Immortal gods! although I died,
A simple hour I'd sooner bide
At home with gentle Lydia pale.

How I love this shapely, palpitating breast!
Ho dancer, to the minuet, and you,
Some Spanish wine!
(*To Rose.*)
And let your glances flow, too, with the wine.
For, God be thanked, my reason 'gins to leave.
Cydalise. You're leaving me to dance alone?
Raphael. My queen,
That's not well said. (*He rises.*)
This table's in our way.
(*He tips it over with his foot.*)
Palforio (*entering*). My Lord, I can say nothing else, except
That for disturbing you I pardon crave.
The dreadful noise you cause has made the folks
Around my house to ask the cause of it.
Pray, scream less loud.
Raphael. Ah, parbleu! I will scream
Much as I please, my belly-bearing host!
Hallo! hallo! Ah, bah!

Palforio. My Lord, I do entreat
That you will notice that 'tis late.
Raphael. Come, peace, old pig!
Remember, I'm an Abbé. Say a word,
And you I'll excommunicate. Go back,
You club-foot!

(*He sings and dances.*)

Sir Abbé, whither dost escape?
Whither away, thy neck to break?

Palforio. Pardon, I beg your honor, but I'll call
The guard, if you insist on screaming thus.
Raphael. Take care
My foot may seek thy breeches.

(*He kicks Palforio.*)

Palforio. Help! help!
I'm dead!
Raphael. Here am I, ventrebleu! in thy vile house,
And being here for pleasure, will not leave.
Palforio. My lord, excuse; this house belongs to me,
And you shall leave it quickly. Help! Police!
Raphael (*hurling a bottle at his head*). Take that!
Palforio. Ah! (*He falls.*)
Cydalise. You have killed him!
Raphael. No.
Cydalise. Yes, yes!

Raphael. No.
Rose. Yes, indeed.
Raphael (*he shakes them off*). Bah!
Palforio, here, old pig! None better knows
Where beggars go at death. I wonder why
That Satan or old Pluto from the first
Have kept their fingers off his hairless nape.
Good night, my faith. The knave's put out his light.
Farewell, thou stomach without head! We'd better go.
The watch would make us pay the damages.
'Tis hard to part so soon. Come, beauty, come.
I thought him worthy; these decrepit souls,
In old sheaths rusted, are like ancient blades.
Cydalise. Peace, they come!
A Voice. You are wanted.
Raphael. Here, I believe,
Led by the Abbé, are the constables.
My angel, let's not wait; this secret gate,
Well hidden, leads us through the little lane
To my hotel.
A Voice. 'Tis there!
Cydalise. O God! If they come in!
Raphael. Come, then! the jacket! the mask! and the hat!
This way, this way. Good night, my Cydalise.
Cydalise. Good night, my prince.
A Sergeant (*entering*). Halt! here are two we take.

Cydalise. My prince, run—save yourself!
The Sergeant. Hold him!
Raphael. It rains,
But what of that? Faith! let him run who may.
(*He jumps through the window.*)
A Soldier. Sergeant, we've nothing, for your man has leaped
Right through the window.
The Sergeant. Follow him fast! What's this? The innkeeper
Is dead! Now speed ye! on the assassin fall!

Scene VIII

(*A street on the sea-shore. Raphael climbing down a lattice. The Abbé in the background.*)

Raphael. A plague on bars! Hey, give me back my vest!
Comrade; where art running now so fast?
Well? and your amours—what of them?
The Abbé. 'Tis he!
Raphael. I am pursued, dear sir. I will explain;
But let me have my coat.
The Abbé. I hear the hue and cry. They're calling you!
Têtebleu! 'tis something great!

Raphael. Oh; a trifle.
I think that I've killed some one where they complain.
The Abbé. Parbleu! is that a fact?
Raphael. Later I will explain; but let me have the coat.
The Abbé. The coat? No, by the Lord, I want not yours;
For you the guard would take me.
Raphael. Oh, what a sanctimonious man!
(*Several people cross the stage.*)
Give me the coat: 'tis well. I'll go and say
Two little words unto those beggars there.
The Abbé. Never
Shall I dare kill that man. (*He sits on a stone.*)
The Sergeant. Ho, there! I seek
For the Lord Raphael.
Raphael. Unless he sits,
As birds are wont, upon some chimney-pot,
Unless he sinks into the ground, or falls
Into the water, you will certainly
Capture this desperate criminal. Do you know
What kind of man he is?
The Sergeant. Yes,
I have his full description: A green plume,
With orange-colored hose.
Raphael. Really! parbleu!
You'll have no trouble, and you'll find it play
To capture so redoubtable a man.
How much, now, do they give you for this work?

The Sergeant. H'm!
Raphael. Think you, really,
Your captain pays you what the work is worth?
Is the goodman soft, or hard, in giving gold?
The Sergeant. Well, he'd not die giving a little more.
I think not on't. My stomach, not my back,
Is toward my work. Better the noose than shame;
And then, the man once hanged, we get his coat.
Raphael. Not counting blows, if he should draw his sword.
The Sergeant. I have good pistols.
Raphael. Let's see, and then?
The Sergeant. My sergeant's club.
Raphael. Good. And then?
The Sergeant. This dagger of Tuscany.
Raphael. Right excellent. And then?
The Sergeant. I have this sword.
Raphael. And then?
The Sergeant. And then! I've nothing more.
Raphael (*beating him*). This for your cries,
And for your pistol.
The Sergeant. Aïe!
Raphael. And for your club,
Your dagger fine from steel of Tuscany.
The Sergeant. Aïe; aïe! I am dead!
Raphael. The Lord Garuci,
No doubt, is home. This is the way you go.
(*He pushes him out.*)

After the fashion of Don Juan is this.
(*Returning.*)
What think you of the rogue? Now let's escape.
For me, to Rome.
(*The Abbé goes to him and runs his dagger in his throat.*)
Abbé! Abbé! are you crazy. (*He falls.*)
I'm out of it.—
Ah, malediction! but you'll pay for this.
(*He tries to rise.*)
The final blow. I choke! Ah, misery!
One blow, last blow, my dear Abbé! The earth
Around me turns. Ah, dog of Abbé, go!
Or by th' eternal Sire, I'll butcher thee!
Why tarry there, thou phantom, who dost stand,
Eyes open wide?
The Abbé. I? I await thy death.
Raphael. Damnation! Will you leave me here to die,
Like to a pagan beggar in the street?
I'll harm you not; come, end me. Just a glass
Of water, for God's love! To mother say,
I give my fortune to my clown, Pippo.
(*He dies.*)
The Abbé. Go! Thy death my life, thou fool! Thy tomb,
The nuptial couch where my betrothed shall lie
Under the canopy of this cold night.
Around the lanterns now the owl doth wheel.
The monstrous sturgeon flingeth from his back

The sea's blue mantle; silent doth he watch
Over its mirror vast, the passing moon.
Crouching and murm'ring low, the sorceress
With words of blood washes for devil's dance
The naked maiden; Hecate, triple-faced,
Wrinkles her white robe on the reedy swamp;
Oh, hark! The hour strikes, and thus computes
A step of time made toward eternity.
Sleep, ashes, in the sea, whose memory.
Shall also sink to heart of darkest wave.
(*He throws the body into the sea.*)
Ye clouds, discharge, to purify this path,
Lest the foot slip that passes on the scene.

Scene IX

(*At the house of Signora Camargo, who is at the piano, silent. A low knocking is heard at the door.*)

Camargo. Come in.
(*The Abbé enters. He presents his dagger to her. Camargo looks at it a time, then rises.*)
He suffered much?
The Abbé. Ha! 'twas the work
Of but a moment, ere he died.
Camargo. What said he?
The Abbé. He said the earth
Was turning.
Camargo. What! no more?

The Abbé. Yes; that he gave his wealth
To his clown Pippo.
Camargo. What! No more?
The Abbé. No, nothing.
Camargo. He wears a diamond ring upon his finger.
I pray, go fetch it me.
The Abbé. I can not go.
Camargo. The place
Where you have left him is not very far.
The Abbé. No, but I can not.
Camargo. Abbé, all I promise thee
I will make good.
The Abbé. I can not get the ring to-night.
Camargo. Why?
The Abbé. Oh! . . .
Camargo. Wretch!
Thou hast not killed him!
The Abbé. May Heaven crush me
If I have not, in very truth, madame!
Camargo. Then why not?
The Abbé. I swear to you, I threw
His body in the sea!
Camargo. What! to-night, into the sea?
The Abbé. Yes, madame.
Camargo. Then it is indeed for you
A thing unfortunate, for on my soul,
That ring I wanted badly.
The Abbé. Had you told it me,
At least . . .

Camargo. Curse thee! what proof have I
to credit thee?
Upon what honor wilt thou swear? On which
Of thy two bloody hands? Where's sign of
it?
The thing's not certain, and thou mayest but
boast.
Thou shouldst have cut the hand and brought it
me.
The Abbé. Madame, the night was come. The
sea was near,
And so I threw him in.
Camargo. I am not sure of it.
The Abbé. Ay, but, madame, this blade is
warm, and it
Is bleeding.
Camargo. Neither blood nor heat are rare.
The Abbé. His body's not so far, some one may
try . . .
Camargo. The night's too dark, the ocean is
too wide.
The Abbé. But I am pale—see me!
Camargo. My dear Abbé,
Was I not, too, to-night, when that I played
The rôle of Thisbe in the opera?
The Abbé. Madame, in name of Heaven! . . .
Camargo. Perhaps, by searching well, you'll
find the corpse.
My window fronts the sea.
(*She leaves.*)

The Abbé. Oh, she is gone! O God!
I've killed my friend. I've merited the fire.
I have stained my coat, and I am sent away.
That is the moral of this comedy.

1829.

TO THE READER OF THE TWO PIECES WHICH FOLLOW

Anxious to be amused, I see the reader go forth
Seeking the opera house, to hear a drama of worth.
Shall he see acting fine, shall he hear some music sweet?
Chances are ten to one if he feels his pulses beat.

Scenes that may make him laugh, or scenes that may make him weep,
Scenes that are but a bore, or him amused keep;
These may be his choice, or he yawns at a dismal play,
What then? It's the fashion to go, to while the time away.

Reader, you take such luck when you buy this offered book;
But then, it costs no more than the seat at the play you took.
Do not be overgrieved if you find its solace a snare,
But be consoled by this, you had not to leave your chair.

OF WHAT YOUNG MAIDENS DREAM

A COMEDY

CHARACTERS

THE DUKE LAERTES.
THE COUNT IRUS, *his Nephew.*
SILVIO.
NINON, NINETTE, } *Twins, daughters of Duke Laertes.*
FLORA, *the Maid.*
SPADILLE, QUINOLA, } *Domestics.*

The scene is where you will.

ACT THE FIRST

SCENE I

(*A bedroom. Ninon, Ninette.*)

Ninette. It strikes eleven. Good night, my sister dear,
For I must go and sleep.
Ninon. Good night. Afraid
To cross the park you must be, with your room
So far, and it is late. Flora I'll send
To keep you company.
Ninette. By no means, for September's sky is bright,
And Bacchanal, besides, will come along.

Here, Bacchanal!

(*She goes out, calling her dog.*)

Ninon (*kneeling at her priedieu*).

O Christe ! dum fixus cruci
Expandis orbi brachia,
Amare da crucem, tuo
Da nos in amplexu mori.

(*Undresses.*)

Ninette (*returning; flings herself into a chair*).
My dear, I'm dead!

Ninon. What ails you? What's amiss?

Ninette. I can not speak.

Ninon. I tremble as I see you breathing there.

Ninette. I was, my dear, not three steps from your door;
A man runs up and lifts me in his arms,
He kisses as he can, then sets me down
And makes off running.

Ninon. Good Lord! What can we do?
Perhaps he was a thief.

Ninette. I think not that.
Upon his shoulder there's a splendid chain,
A Spaniard's cloak all lined with velvet black,
And two big spurs that shone amid the grass.

Ninon. This thing is far too strange to understand,
How any gentleman could try such tricks—
A man in cloak of black—the devil, sure.
Who knows, my dear? Yes, or perhaps a ghost!

Ninette. I can not think so, dear; there's his mustache.

Ninon. I'm thinking, tell me, then; some lover now?

Ninette. If he should come again, you let me hide.

Ninon. It may be that papa would frighten you.

Howe'er it be, Ninette, some one must take
You back. Come, Flora, come! Attend her home.

(*Flora appears at the door.*)

Good-by, and close your door.

Ninette. And you close yours.

(*Kisses her, and goes out with Flora.*)

Ninon (*alone; bolting the door*). Two spurs of silver, cloak with velvet lined!
A chain! A kiss! Extraordinary this!

(*Letting down her hair.*)

I don't look well in bands. My hair's too short.
I guessed it right, for father is the one.
Ninette is timid. He could watch her pass,
His daughter; plain enough that he may kiss
His child. My bracelets, how they fit.
(*Unfastens them.*) Methinks,
That strange young man who comes to dine with us
To-morrow. He's a husband, possibly,
For us. How droll! I think I feel afraid.
Which dress shall I put on? (*Lies down.*)

A summer robe?
No, winter. That should give the proper air.
No, summer. That is younger, less elaborate.
At table he will sit between us two.
Ninette will please him. Bah! we'll wait and see.
And spurs of silver, cloak with velvet trimmed!
Good God! how warm it is for autumn nights.
And still I must have sleep. I hear a stir!
'Tis Flora coming in. No, no one yet.
Trala, traderi, la. How nice in bed!
How ugly aunty looked in those old plumes
At supper yesterday! How white my arms!
Tra, deri, da! My eyes are shut. Mustache;
He grasps, and kisses her and runs away.

(*Begins to drum. A sound of guitar and voice at the window.*)

The Voice.

Ninon, Ninon, this life you scorn.
The hour takes wing, day follows day.
This eve the rose, it fades with morn.
What's left that, loveless, ebbs away?

Ninon (*waking*). Is it a dream? I thought I heard a song.

The Voice.

Look on yourself, Ninon, my child.
Your eye it glances, heart beats wild.
To-day the spring, to-morrow morn
The winter comes, and you're forlorn.
You have no star to be your guide;
You feel no love, you speak with pride.

One glance of love would gladden me;
I'd give my life if 'twere for thee.

Ninon. I was not wrong; those words, how strange!
The singer knows my name. How can this be?
He knows some beauty, and her name Ninon.
The Voice.

O life, the day begins anew,
When glows the earth with passion true.
Unfold, ye flowers! Let sleep depart.
Let darkness heal fair Cupid's smart.
This life's a sleep, and love its dream;
My life is yours, with love its gleam.

Ninon (*raising the blind*). His silver spurs are glittering with dew;
A chain with golden tassels on his cloak.
Mustache is curled. He pulls at it, and goes.
Who is the man? How shall I learn his name?

Scene II

(*Irus, dressing. Spadille, Quinola.*)

Irus. Which one of you, you rogues, put on my wig?
The ribbons scratch me in the neck; besides,
I'm smeared with powder, and my eyes they smart.
Quinola. Not I.
Spadille. Nor I.
Quinola. I stood and held the cue.

Spadille. I, sir, was combing.
Irus. Liars—you both are liars!
Come quick! Rose-colored coat, culottes of blue.
Hum! brum! This powder! Devil, I am blind.
(*Sneezes.*)
Quinola (*opening a wardrobe*). Monsieur could hardly wear the blue culottes.
The lamp was near, and all the oil leaked out.
Quinola (*opening a second*). Monsieur, the coat of pink is all besmeared;
Unfolding it, I found the cat lay there.
Irus. Is this the way you frustrate all my plans?
My friends, hear me! I have a new idea.
What is the hour?
Spadille. Monsieur, the clock has stopped.
Irus. Have they rung twice already to come to dine?
Quinola. No one has rung.
Spadille. Yes, yes; some one did ring.
Irus. I tremble every moment lest our guest
Who is to come to dine, come not to-day.
Spadille. And you must dress in green.
Quinola. Better wear gray.
Irus. What month is this?
Spadille. November is the month.
Quinola. 'Tis August, August!
Irus. These two coats put on,
And then walk to and fro about the room,
That I may watch the effect I shall produce.
(*They obey.*)

Spadille. I look a marquis.
Quinola. Minister am I.
Irus (*watching him*). Spadille's a goose, Quinola pedant-like.
I am not sure of which to make my choice.
Laertes (*entering*). And you, my nephew, look like a dunce complete.
Why are you not ashamed to powder head,
And lose, in running round your cabinet,
More time than it to write a sonnet takes?
Come on to dine; your plate impatient waits.
Irus. You would not, would you, on your life, I say,
So drag me off, no rouge, and naked half?
What coat have I to wear?
Laertes. The handiest, first.
Now listen to me, for at the table sits
Our newcomer—a charming fellow, young,
On marriage bent with one of my two girls.
In God's name, cast a look of triumph not
On him, and gaze on some one else; but strive
To please, and do not bolt the dishes down,
As is your wont. Quiet and shy is he,
And well-behaved; a decent fellow. Try,
If you should find his manner somewhat plain,
Not to let loose, when taking in your snuff,
Your winning smile, your jokes from almanacs.
Upon your luck with women don't descant,
Nor flood yourself with those accursed perfumes;

Our noses we must hold to talk with you;
White gloves are out of place; bare hands at meals.
Irus. You tempt me quite, to square with all your views,
To doff my coat of green and dress in black.
Laertes. No, no; by all the saints, I thank you, no!
A plague upon you! Who would care a fig,
If green your coat, to note that fact, parbleu!
Irus. May I at least request this young man's name?
Laertes. And what is that to you? His name is Silvio.
Irus. Not bad is Silvio; that name is fine;
Irus and Silvio; mine's best.
Laertes. His father is my friend—your mother's, too.
We've had our plan, for twenty years or more,
To die one family, unite our race.
And would to Heaven that son a brother had.
Irus. Monsieur le Duc, what do you mean by this?
Am I not fit to be a son-in-law?
Laertes. Good, good, I know. But you can learn to wait
And take your turn, but Silvio shall choose.

Scene III

(*The Garden. Ninon, Ninette, in different arbors.*)

Ninon. That voice is ringing yet within my ear.
Ninette. That wondrous kiss doth make me quiver still.
Ninon. At midnight we shall see, and wait and wait.
Ninette. To-night no sleep; to-night I will not sleep.
Ninon. Sweet is your voice, and sweet your songs are, too;
Mysterious singer, come once more this eve.
Or, as the swallow sighs and flies away,
Shall happiness, one instant here, take flight?
Ninette. O daring phantom, shrouded in that veil,
Shall dangers lurk in shadows of the night?
Or shall I see you in that pathway's gloom,
Or will you vanish like the hunted fawn?
Ninon. Earth, air, and water, all in harmony:
A nightingale doth warble in my heart.
I hear the genii murmuring 'neath the reeds.
Have I new senses sister dreams not of?
Ninette. Why can I not behold without delight,
Without a pang, the zephyr kiss the stream,

And linden shadows tremble o'er my arm?
My sister is a child, but I am not!
Ninon. O flowers of summer nights, magnificent!
O plants! O bending boughs, together interlaced.
Ninette. O foliaged palm, queen of the verdant world,
Pour forth your love, encircled by the breeze!
(*Exeunt.*)
Silvio (*entering*). Still my heart hesitates, for both are fair!
So like to like, twins by the grace of Heaven!
Two forms so filled of light, two hearts as one,
And either one might be her sister's mold.
Pale are they, both of them, and both are shy,
Frail as a reed, blond as a blade of wheat;
And like twin trembling aspens they vibrate
At touch of hand. My senses are confused;
I can not speak; a fever whirls my thoughts;
At any word my soul would leap to tongue.
But they, how gently bred! what supple grace!
I left my college hall but yesterday.
(*Enter Laertes, Irus with a cigar.*)
Laertes. Well, well! Our guest, where are the ladies now?
Irus. Just after dining, and without cigar?
Silvio. Dear Duke, dear father, move one step I can't. (*Embracing Laertes.*)
My being seems to fail.
(*Ninon and Ninette enter.*)

Irus. The ladies come.
Ninon, my chin is smooth—a kiss is due!
(*Ninon runs off, Irus goes after her.*)
Laertes. The wine at dinner has befuddled him.
(*They saunter away.*)

Scene IV

(*Ninette. Flora. Ninon, later.*)

Ninette. You hurry, Flora. Tell me where you got
That chain of acorns. Who could give you that?
Ninon (*running in*). Let's see—come now.
Quite out of breath am I.
That Irus is a fool. You found them all?
A pretty necklace. Flora's proud indeed.
Flora (*to Ninon*). I wish to speak to you.
(*Leads her to a corner.*)
Ninon. What mystery?
Flora. Return into your room and read this note.
Ninon. A note? But whence?
Flora. You tuck it, if you please,
In there—the little corner o'er your heart.
(*She puts it in her bosom.*)
Ninon. You know the secret?
Flora. I? There's naught I know!
(*Ninon goes out, running.*)

Ninette. What said you to my sister? Why her haste?

Flora (*producing another note*). For you to read.

Ninette. Why! And read I will!
But what is this? Explain.

Flora. Read on—read on.
But yet, take care, I see your father there;
Go to the room and think to lock the door.

Ninette. Why so?

Flora. To read more clearly, more at ease.
(*Exeunt.*)
(*Enter Laertes and Silvio.*)

Silvio. I think our coming puts the girls to flight.
I fear the ladies have some fault to find.

Laertes. Good, let them run. You'll please them quick enough.
Tell me, friend, if you have spent spare time
In paying court to ladies, now and then,
What measures best to tame the cruel fair?

Silvio. Father, don't rail at me; I'd ill defend
Myself, although I come of southern blood.
Never imbroglios, no, nor gallantries,
Nor art mysterious of flatteries,
Nor art of being loved, my portion was.
Under the sky I'll live, as if on earth
I'd just arrived, seek touch of hand to hand.
A tear-drop, or a sigh of sympathy,
For me is love, and always will be love.

Passion do I possess, but not its eloquence.
My rivals with their honeyed words may charm,
I, in my silence, know but how to love.
Laertes. The women, after all, require a master's hand.
Indeed, though loving not, if one is bold,
He pleases them. So dear is courage then,
They love a war to get a conqueror.
Believe me, I have known them variable.
They say no two leaves ever are alike,
Or two hearts made the same; I'll promise you
That, in seducing one, the world's seduced.
One has flat feet, the other a plump leg,
But, for the genus, it will never change.
Say, have you seen an English steeplechase?
They take four thoroughbreds, by riders driven;
The course is shown them, and they're told to go!
The thing is to arrive, no matter how,
Whether in ravine, or on a beaten track.
This one will win, should he not meet a stream,
The other wins if he'll not break his neck.
Love, Silvio, is but a test of strength;
You have to reach the goal, which is the woman.
Of torrent have a care, beware of rock;
Do what you will, the goal's immovable.
But know you're taking all your pains for naught,
If you but keep your place and cry aloud,
" I love thee, goal! Come to me, or I die."
Silvio. I feel the truth of this your parable,

But, if I have no skill by words to win,
What could I do of worth, when action comes?
The real world for me a fiction is
Like to a mandolin on cushion laid,
That some one has forgotten; so am I:
It holds within a language that's divine,
But if the master sleeps, who hears its spell?
Laertes. Therefore do you attend to what I say:
A husband, if received from father's hand,
Is, for a tender maid, but sorry fare;
Then is the wedding-ring a gilded snake.
'Tis in the summer nights, on ladder thin,
A sword within his hand, in mantle dressed,
A maiden of fifteen dreams of her love.
She sees a hero ere she sees the man.
A father's spouse is one of flesh and blood.
There, dear Silvio, what I wish from you
Is knowledge of some fine accomplishment.
Know you the fencing art?
Silvio. Yes, I have drawn the sword.
Laertes. And as for pistol work, you kill the manikin,
Not so? 'Tis well; my valets you shall kill.
My daughters have two letters just received;
No farther seek, for I addressed them both.
Ah, could you understand just what it means,
A billet-doux when one is just fifteen!
How charming is the place it occupies!
First, next the heart; then, after, at the belt;

The pocket follows; then the bureau-drawer;
Now it is taken out for carriage-ride!
Visits the ball! Or, often on the way,
Deep in the pocket, lies all closely pressed!
And how, all silently, at father laugh,
Who nothing knows of love, from immemorial times!
With great ado it stirs these little heads!
Do you desire to find out who you are
This very hour? You are a noble knight,
The fair Prince Galaor, who lives in Arcady;
Lara himself are you; I signed your name;
Th' old Duke's chosen son-in-law! But no,
Out of the sky you drop, like tragedy,
Bully my valets, force my bolts and bars;
The watch-dog you caress; enslave the girl;
The bane and terror of the family.
And this we wish the groom-elect to be.
Silvio. Such an idea makes me melancholy;
'Tis just, indeed; but it distresses me.
Laertes. Young man, and have you not ideals too?
Silvio. Why not, like every one? We see a star,
Distant, unknown, of which we've always dreamed;
But most must die without discovering it.
Laertes. Do you attach great price to childishness?
The fact prevents not women to be wise,
Wholesome, and frank of heart; 'tis all of taste;

That pleases them; 'tis charming, and it wins.
Hark to me, Silvio; this evening
You shall enwrap you in a cloak of black;
Flora will slumber, for I've paid her well.
These ladies will descend in morning gowns,
For they will apprehend from double note
That you were looking to appoint a tryst.
For, if not that, what good's a billet-doux?
Then penetrate into the chamber loved.
Enter alone, like a conspirator.
Then, gay deceiver, what will you enact?
Some screaming will be heard. The father comes,
Like to the general in *Festin de Pierre,*
In chamber robe will suddenly appear;
Candle in hand, he then will challenge you.
You shall extinguish it with rapier stroke.
Right there we'll carry on a bloodless war,
And all the blood which need be shed, will be,
As soon as spilled, well covered with sawdust,
To make believe it's blood lost in the fray.
No one shall know what has become of you,
And both the girls will moan " O Heaven; he's hurt! "
Silvio. I can not play a part in such a pass.
Consider, my dear Duke, where I'd arrive.
Know you, since it must be that one I wed,
If I should love inspire, whom shall I love?
Laertes. Perchance the twain. Is it not true, my son,

If I esteem, wherein can one reprove?
Son, well-belov'd! Let fools go wag their tongues.
Silvio. With words, alone, the earth has been upheaved.
Laertes. Eh! what's that to me? I've none but you,
After my daughters twain. Why care for sneers?
Under your golden head, you've wisely grown
To venerate my honor and renown.
Silvio. Ah, I would sooner die than injure you!
Laertes. Let us suppose of both you are beloved.
The one who will remain will pardon you.
Your image, Silvio, will banished be
By a new fancy, by a suitor new;
For children, credit me, love the unknown.
When once you shall be master of the place,
And every day at table will preside,
Your mere propinquity will gender love;
After the coffee, when beside the board,
The being of mystery becomes a friend.
My son, you will be loved, and this I crave:
If my fool nephew speaks of marrying,
He'll be detested for impertinence,
And this is as I wish. My daughters sweet,
The one shall be your wife, the other prove
A sister. Thus, I trust, my brother's son
Husband-elect to one of my dear girls,

Who will not stoop to soil their father's hearth,
Nor of his silvery hairs will dare make sport.
Who knows?—perhaps, one day, my lonely one
Shall chance to find the husband whom she needs.
You see I do not count on Irus now;
Th' important thing is to avoid this fool.
(*Enter Irus.*)

Irus. My lord, have supper; it is past the hour!

Laertes. Why have you gone and changed your coat again?

Irus. This is a better fit; the last too snug.
(*Exeunt.*)

ACT THE SECOND

Scene I

(*The garden. It is night. Duke Laertes, in dressing-gown; Silvio, wrapped in mantle.*)

Laertes. So soon as that faint light which one perceives,
From window unto window makes its wanderings,
Shall to this corner turn, to reappear
No more, it shall be time to act.

Silvio. I've said, my lord, this thing displeases me.

Laertes. Ah, well. For me, all this amuses me.
With melancholy I'm not waging any war;

Save idleness, it is the best of ills;
In general, it's a touchstone to my mind!
Shy plant, we never see it flourishing
With fools and overfed pomposity;
But, Silvio, cheerfulness becomes old age;
We yearn for beauty, loving sadness too.
One touch of rouge at sixty fits us well;
An old man's task it is to cheer old time.
And why should men make age a mere reproach?
The answer's plain: with most of mortal men,
When not a prude, it is a go-between.
Cassandra is the dread of lenient age.
And yet, think you that simple nature lets
Her creatures live forgetting her, my dear?
That she has granted thirty years of life,
And then the rest to groan or knit away.
Imagine, Silvio, how I sang last night
Quite famously, at least an hour or more?
I so perplexed my daughters; but, by Jove,
I think the truth was, I amused myself.
Silvio. And so, in this, dear Duke, 'tis you I love.
To be myself again is now my need.
Reflect, my friend, nothing will be left,
No hero, nor romance.
Laertes. Good Lord, I know.
A novel in a bed, one knows not what,
And every dream may then be realized.
The bagatelle comes first, the real we need;
And you, my boy, I hope have this in you.

It is the rule, in any case like this,
That those who chatter much, attain no proof,
And this reveals God's wisdom all in all.
Musk-scented gallants, blooming like the rose,
We see them morn and eve, from tryst to tryst,
So pliant, soft as gloves before the girls;
They climb the walls, they dance above the rails;
At finger-tip they have the thing you need,
And what they lack you have within your heart.
No harlequin for son-in-law to me!
No fellow shaped to slip through keyholes! Now
Were you like them, I were disconsolate.
But yet the method! You must strive to please.
Once you are married, why, the affair is yours.
Allow me, I would beg, one question more:
Have you till now existed passionless?
Or, frankly, now, are you a virgin knight?
Silvio. In heart, in soul, in body, head to feet.
Laertes. No man I loathe as much as youthful rakes.
The hearts of libertines are like an inn:
At any hour you find the fire ablaze;
Good quarters; bed well made; above the door
The key; you enter now; to-morrow go!
Such timber never makes a husband, sir!
The wife is new, let all be new to you.
No blessing is't that you her elder be
In body nor in heart. Now try to guess
What joy may lurk in love's astonishment!

She has her secrets, you will have your own.
Be children long—the other children come!
A secret here that men too soon forget.
Silvio. And if my wife expects a profligate,
How dreadful must my ignorance appear!
Do you fear naught from such astonishments?
Laertes. Like an impertinence my words may sound.
My daughters feed on innocent romance.
Ah, Silvio, a precious flower I give to you;
Gently remove the ignorant sweet leaves.
Did you but know the wrong some husbands work,
Imparting to their brides those infamies
Concealed by most, thus likening tender wives
To women without shame, of whom they've learned,
And naught leave new except adultery.
If you were such, Irus I would prefer.
I'll quote some words I found in Hesperus:
" Do thou respect thy wife; heap bed of earth
Around that plant ready to blossom forth;
But suffer none to fall within the bloom."
Silvio. My father, to my arms! I see sweet heaven!
Laertes. More white than heifer is, my son thou art.
More pure than is her milk, your heart;
Humble of soul are you; such pleases me.
Have faith in him who gives to you his child.

Since I have joined you to my family,
My choice is good; I'm making no mistake.
Silvio. From window unto window light is come.
Laertes. The hour's about to strike. Son, to my arms!
Silvio. It flickers in the dark, 'tis going to disappear.
Laertes. You have your rôle by heart, and naught forgot?
Silvio. The light's gone out.
Laertes. Bravo! The hour has come!
Come quietly along the avenue wall.
Forward, my cavalier, on soft tiptoe.
(*Exeunt.*)

Scene II

(*A terrace. Ninon, Ninette, en déshabillé.*)

Ninon. What do you there so late, my sweet Ninette?
'Tis time to go to sleep. You'll take a chill.
Ninette. I came to see the moon so beautiful.
How full of stars the sky!
Ninon. Tra, la, la!
Ninette. What said you?
Ninon. It is a minuet.
But without love. Heigh ho! my dear ballade!
Ninette. Get you to bed, Ninon; I couldn't go
To sleep.

Ninon. My faith, no more could I.
(*Aside.*) Now if he were to come!
Ninette (*singing*).

Leonore, whose lover near,
Once said to her, my little dear . . .

Ninon. I really am afraid you're taking cold!
Ninette. I'm choking with the heat.
(*Aside.*) I tremble lest he fail.
Ninon (*taking up the song*).

Who said to her, my little dear . .

Ninette. I do believe she means to sleep out here!
Ninon. Some one comes up the stair. If it were he!
Ninette (*continuing*).

Leonore, whose lover near . . .

Ninon. She has no thought of leaving me alone.
And if he were to come!
Ninette. Dear sister mine, now please,
Do go and get to bed!
Ninon. And why? I'm very well.
Now listen: promise me you'll nothing say;
I'm going to confide . . .
Ninette. I must confess to you . . .
Ninon. Swear to me on the honor . . .
Ninette. The secret do not breathe.

Ninon. Here, then; this letter open.
Ninette. And you, read o'er this note.
Ninon (*reading*). "If love can make excuse for my folly, in the name of Heaven, my lovely lady, grant to me . . ."
Ninette (*reading*). "If love can make excuse for my folly, in the name of Heaven, my lovely lady, grant to me . . ."
The Two Together. Great Heaven! The same name!
Ninette. My dear, some one is making game of us!
Ninon. Oh, horrors!
Ninette. I'll die of it.
Ninon. Could anything be bolder!
Ninette. Flora shall pay me dear for having carried it.
Ninon. That handsome necklace was her recompense.
Ah me!
Ninette. Ah me!
Ninon. My dear, now that I think of it,
'Tis he who in the English park but yesterday
Had followed you.
Ninette. 'Twas he who sung.
Ninon. You know that?
Ninette. I was listening.
Ninon. I thought he was so handsome!
Ninette. So tender, I believed him!

Ninon. We'll tell him what he is, my dear;
We must await him here.
Ninette. Willingly stay we here.
Ninon. How, think you, does he look?
Ninette. Dark, with large eyes and with a fine mustache.
We shall avenge ourselves most tellingly.
Ninon. Dark, and yet pale—some idle musketeer.
A pretty lesson he will learn from us!
Ninette. Well-formed, a hand that's white, well-bred, and yet,
My dear, he is a monster we should fear.
Ninon. Fine teeth, bright eyes. Oh, bring the monster here,
And he shall hear me talk.
Ninette. And so refined in speech! I wish him here.
Ninon. To tell him in two words . . .
Ninette. To have him understand . . .
Ninon. He looked so love-lorn, if one were fooled . . .
Ninette. Oh, good Heavens! some one's coming; is it he?
Ninon. 'Tis he—'tis he, my dear!

(*Silvio enters, his face covered by his mantle, and sword in hand.*)

Ninette (*seeing that he falters*). I pray you, come this way, sir!

(*Irus enters, sword in hand, from one side; the Duke Laertes from the other.*)

Irus. Hallo! what noise is this?

(*Laertes and Silvio cross swords.*)

Irus (*interposing himself*). My Lord, demand if he's a gentleman.

Laertes (*in the darkness giving Irus a blow with the flat of his sword*). No, no, it is a thief!

Irus (*falling*). Aye! aye! he's murdered me.

(*Flora empties out of the window a bucketful of water over the head of Irus.*)

Help! help! I'm being drowned. Huh! I'm wet through

And through.

(*Laertes and Silvio withdraw.*)

Ninon. What's become of Silvio?

Ninette. Father nowhere I see.

(*They seek about and come upon Irus.*)

The Two. Help! 'gainst a fool assassin! Here he lies.

(*They run away.*)

Irus (*alone, lying prone*). Yes, yes, don't wait around; once on my feet,

If I should say one word they'll finish me.

(*In the darkness. Flora entering, comes upon Irus, whom she mistakes for Silvio.*)

Flora. Is that you, my Lord Silvio?

Irus (*aside*). Let her believe it.

'Tis I—I'm Silvio.

Flora (*recognizing Irus*). Indeed, you did receive
A rapier stroke or two? Into this closet step.
(*She pushes him through an open window.*)
Ninette (*coming upon Silvio, at the end of the balcony*). Enter within this room, or you are lost.
(*She locks him in her room.*)

Scene III

(*A chamber. Day is dawning. Irus, stepping out of a closet, Silvio out of a wardrobe.*)

Irus. I hear no more a sound.
Silvio. No more a soul I see.
Irus. By the great God! monsieur, what are you doing here?
Silvio. That is a question which is mine also.
Irus. Oh, as you like, but mine has right of way.
Silvio. I leave it to you, then, with no reply.
Irus. Oh, so! I'll answer it. I'm in my place.
It's not by climbing o'er a terrace wall
That hither I am come, like any thief.
I come, God's body! like any man of pluck.
I do not hide myself.
Silvio. You step forth from a closet.
Irus. If you require proof of what I say,

I am your man, my little country lordling.

Silvio. However, as for you, you crow too loud.
(*He starts to go.*)

Irus. By blood and death! my little gentleman,
You must be taught your betters to respect.
So that's your way of picking up a glove!

Silvio. Monsieur, you bore me with your idle scene.
Of what you shout I neither know nor care.

Irus. 'Twill not be best for you to tread on me.
For, God alive! I'm not afraid of four.
For, ventrebleu! I'd swallow you alive.

Silvio. Look here, my dear monsieur, let's rather go and fight.
If you continue thus, I'll mar your face.

Irus. Mordieu! Don't think I'm wavering at all.

Laertes (*behind the scenes*). Ninette! I say, Ninon!

Irus. My father! Not a word.
Let us escape, monsieur; we'll meet again.
(*He reenters the closet, and Silvio the wardrobe.*)

Laertes. Ninon! Ninon!

Ninon (*entering*). Father, after the horrid tale
That's been enacted here, your pardon I await.
Silvio no more I love. Unhappy shall I live,
And it is my resolve with Irus to be wed.
(*She falls upon her knees.*)

Laertes. I'm charmed that you no longer care
for him.
What novel, Ninon, have you lately read?
Ninette (*entering, falls upon her knees on the opposite side*). Oh, father dear! after the awful scene
To which these walls last night bore witness,
My uttermost I'll do to bear my fate;
My lover false I hate; I hate myself.
If you consent to it, I'll Irus wed.
Laertes. My little ones, there's nothing I'd refuse.
You have offended me; I love you just the same;
Indeed, I will not hinder your desires.
Now to your rooms retire; to-night, at eventide,
The assembled family you'll find below,
And since the two of you can not wed one,
Irus shall make his choice; and now be good.
Remember all misfortune has an end.
Now go you, take your leave.
(*He goes off; Ninon and Ninette follow him.*)

Scene IV

(*Irus, opening the closet; Silvio.*)

Irus. You have overheard?
Silvio. Perfectly, monsieur, and I am stupefied!
Which one will you select?
Irus. I render no account.

Silvio. Monsieur le Comte, I beg that you will state
Which of the sisters I can woo myself.
Irus. I do not know, monsieur; I must reflect.
Silvio. More pleasing is Ninette to you, it seems,
Irus. You've said it; it was she I did prefer.
Silvio. 'Tis well. And now, let's go and fight.
Irus. I've said to you, monsieur, I must reflect.
(*Exeunt.*)

Scene V

(*The Garden. Laertes, Irus, Ninette, Spadille, Quinola.*)

Laertes (*alone*). O Lord! two daughters hast thou given me;
I ne'er set watch to hem my treasure in;
Thou hast entrusted me with their sweet love;
Never have I encroached on their virginity,
Nor marred the golden wings of innocence.
I've suffered in their souls Thy will to grow;
The vigilance of man is weak at best.
Thine own it is, O Lord! that never sleeps.
My children are from thee; I am their sire;
I but desired to give to them a dear friend.
Now fully grown, made beautiful by Thee,
Within their childish arms, with filial love,

They have embraced their brother with white locks;
Their vigor has lent strength unto his soul;
Their youthful sweetness clings about his life,
Compelling slower steps unto the tomb;
Nature to them her mystery doth unfold.
When falls this luscious fruit, 'twill shake the dust
Of gold that covers Love's enraptured wings.
Love plucks these buds from off their quivering stems.
I place them in your care, my God! these hearts,
And if deserved, vouchsafe them happiness.
(*Two pistol-shots are heard.*)
What quarreling is here? Why that report?
(*Irus enters, his head enveloped in his handkerchief; Spadille bearing his hat, and Quinola his peruke.*)
Now why the devil do you play the fool,
My nephew?
Irus. I am dead. He aimed at me, just now.
Laertes. 'Twas early in the day for fuddling you.
Irus. But only see my hat! there is his shot.
Laertes. Oh! then it is your hat that's dying, but not you.
(*Enter Ninon and Ninette, both robed as nuns.*)
And now, what mean for us these vestal robes?
Is this, perchance, an hospital for fools?

Ninon. Dear father, please allow us two poor girls
To go and end our days in convent walls.
Laertes. Ha! that's the quarter whence the wind doth blow?
Ninette. My Lord, your daughters are indeed condemned;
They ne'er shall have a husband save their God.
Laertes. Irus, my dear, behold your lost domain.
One always takes the bad to save from worse;
My daughters would prefer to marry God, than you.
Arise, my children; I am gratified
To see you both in love with Silvio.
Enter my home. This is a day of joy.
And you, my dear young fellow, change your vest.
Irus. Have I some blood upon me? My ear, it hurts.
Spadille. Yes, monsieur.
Quinola. No, monsieur.
Irus. I acted well my part.
(*Exeunt.*)

Scene VI

(*The Terrace. Ninon. Silvio on a bench.*)

Silvio. Listen, Ninon, I'm in no way to blame;
For this romance has naught of truth in it,
Save my heart's love I feel convulsing me.

Ninon. Hush, you; I've made a vow I'd love you not.
Silvio. By mistake of Flora it was done,
That last night's letter had the same address;
'Twas in directing them I made mistake;
By slip of pen your sister's name I wrote.
Your own, so like yourself, resembles hers.
The hand's not firm, alas! when trembles heart,
And I was trembling, just as you are, child.
Ninon. What purpose could they serve, letters alike?
I'd listen well with all the ears I have,
If you'd deceive me not with words so sweet.
Silvio. Ninon, I love you, on my bended knees!
Ninon. When one sends off a note, one reads it, sir;
When one recopies it, the draft's destroyed.
It's not so hard to rightly pen a name.
But, how am I to trust you, Silvio?
You do not answer aught.
Silvio. I love you, Ninon.
Ninon. When one is blameless, his defense is good.
The day you sang in such a tender tone,
Quite well you knew my name; I heard you sing.
My sister knows quite well that she was kissed,
When venturing in the park, by one like you.
As to the letter with its wrong address,
How could you mix my sister's name with mine?

Consider, then, what shameful thing it is
To serenade Ninon, and kiss Ninette?
Silvio. 'Tis you, Ninon, I only truly love;
Your eyes of diamond, and ruby lips,
The rose-bloom of your cheeks, your pearly teeth,
Your tender glance, is happiness complete.
Ninon. What would one say to argument like this?
Silvio. Your form as plaint as a verdant palm;
Your tresses light as are the flakes of fire
That upward fly from new-created flame;
They crown your ivory brow all shining white;
Your eyes are full of light, like amber waves
On shores of Niemen; limpid is their glance
As drop of dew on pomegranate flower.
Ninon. Your own, my friend, are drowning in their tears.
Silvio. Your voice rings sweeter than a fairy song;
Your nature like harmonious music thrills;
From you comes happiness as though from heaven.
Let me but kiss the sandal of your foot,
Let me but bask in light of your sweet eyes.
Do not wed Irus, and I'll be content
To linger here in silence by your side,
My hand within your hand, to walk through life,
To feel each day my heart in rapture beat . . .

Ninon. Hush, you; I've made a vow I'd love you not.

Scene VII

(*A salon. The Duke Laertes seated on a platform; Irus on his right, in a crimson suit, his sword in hand. Silvio on his left. Spadille, Quinola, standing.*)

Laertes. Behold me on my throne seated, a judge.
At my feet, innocence may refuge seek.
Irus my headsman is; confessor, Silvio;
Lord justices for honor of the home.
Chamberlain Quinola, bring my daughters two.
(*Ninon and Ninette enter, dressed as shepherdesses.*)
Ninon. 'Tis in mine own, as in my sister's name,
That I declare unto your Lordship high
The unalterable resolve we have decided on.
Laertes. Look, how the cloister's garb has been transformed!
Ninette. Far from the world we'll live, in lands remote,
Watching our sheep, along the streamlet's edge;
We'll spin soft wool, just as your vassals do;
Here we renounce our just inheritance.
We know, my lord, that anger, justified,
Gives you the right your children to forget.

Laertes. You're coming, aren't you, sometimes to dine?
Ninette. We crave from all a lasting solitude;
We only ask to end our days in peace;
If he that led us ill should once offend,
Our counsel, seigneur, you should write the king.
Laertes. The king, were I to write, would answer me
That he is too engaged with cares of state.
So, all that I can do is, call the mayor,
And this I've done, for he's to sup with us.
(*Enter a mayor and notary.*)
(*To Ninon.*)
Go, darling, and embrace your Silvio.
I give a father's blessing to you both.
(*To Ninette.*)
You will not go away, my sweet Ninette;
Do you your brother kiss—you both are one.
(*To Irus.*)
Irus, my son, I hope your head's improved,
Be happy, too; your coat becomes you well.

SEPTEMBER, 1832.

THE CUP AND THE LIP

DRAMATIC POEM

Between the cup and the lip there is yet place for a mishap.—*Ancient Proverb.*

CHARACTERS

FRANK, *a Huntsman.*
STRANIO, *a Count.*
GUNTHER, *a Knight.*
FRANK'S *Lieutenant.*
MONNA BELCOLORE.
DÉIDAMIA.
Mountaineers, Knights, Monks, People.

DEDICATION

To M. ALFRED T——

THIS poem, dear friend, I dedicate to you:
Something approaching to a tragedy,
A spectacle; in short, a quire of paper.
Now I shall sleep until the devil calls.
'Tis good to sleep, but ignoble to yawn.
I've made three thousand verses: that is good.
But, one to his profession must keep close.
Yet what a singular and sad content
A manuscript produces! On my table
All I was writing seemed so very fine,
But now, indeed, I dare not look at it.

While working, every nerve and fiber keen
Vibrates as does a lyre that has been tuned.
With every word one's being fairly thrills,
And, pride aside, that's really how one feels.
One does not work: he listens, and he waits,
Like an unknown who speaks in quiet tones.
At times one stands all night on certain spot,
Without one motion, like a man of stone,
Or like a child dressed in his Sunday clothes,
Who fears to soil them or profane himself;
And then—and then—in short! One's head aches so!
What strange awakening! How lame one feels!
It seems that Mercury has fall'n from heaven!
It is the effect produced by wantonness,
The body sated, then the soul awakes.
In tears the spirit lifts the shroud of joy,
To find the living being but a corpse.
The spirit gone, the body is but clay;
It is the human bier; we take a look,
We see a face, then, closing lid again,
Remember nothing but its sufferings.

If all but ended there! Oh, thought supreme!
Like Jesus, crowned with flame invisible,
Having just feasted with the Pharisee.
At times the host sees aureole of flame
Crowning his guest divine, which fades away.
He says to Son of God: Are you His son?
Is it not possible, my honored guest,

That your familiar dæmon's not of heaven?
There is no question in correcting faults
Like commentator studying a verse,
Nor chewing cud, like ruminating ox.
Enough, indeed, of vermin are on hunt,
And many sift a tale unfortunate,
As Spanish shepherds scan a leprous dog.
To think one holds an apple of bright gold,
Yet press a turnip tenderly to heart!
That, my dear friend, will lead an author straight
To suicide or to infanticide.

Then rhymers, as you see, before they write,
Have dim ideas, and like lovers are,
Beside the fair one as yet unpossessed.
We follow her, whose every turn enchants;
We stir the fire, and in the ashes gaze,
Yet see her flit, a salamander sweet;
Each word addressed her is a billet-doux;
We give her suppers; this, you know, is true
(You could, if need were, sup with a princess).
Once she surrenders, then the charm has ceased;
We see the swallow dying in her cage,
And hope for some sweet memory of love.
We keep the perfume as we pluck the flower.
There is no love but has some souvenir.

When the young maiden in the near-by spring
'Neath the while lilies plunges joyfully,
She tarries in the sun, with white soft hands

Fondling her beautiful yet dripping hair,
Emerging from the wave like Venus crowned,
Covered with rubies like a Persian blade;
Her mother on her forehead kisses her,
And feels the freshness of her daughter's blood;
But when a poet in a fountain springs,
He's like a poacher harried on the plain,
Who, drinking water, then must run and hide.
For my part, I care not for criticism;
Fly though it may, it seldom has a sting.
Last year they called me Byron's copyist;
You know me, and you know it is not so.
I loathe as death the state of plagiarist;
My glass, though small, from it alone I drink.
The best I know is, be an honest man,
And true is this, I nothing disinter.

Not being in love with public livery,
I ne'er became a party pamphleteer.
Besides, I never yet have made pretense
To ape the century or its passions mad.
Sad trade it is to follow the dull crowd,
Shout louder than the leaders, and keep pace,
A-hanging on the coat-tails of the mob.
One's always dry when he's got naught to drink.
How many people shout for liberty,
Who lauded kings, or hero of Brumaire!
How many people echoing *vox populi,*
Extol the god they once had buffeted!
I label them with name of knavishness.

Such is the world, they say, " then 'tis to laugh."
Abhorrent trade, abhorrent artisan.
You think it fine? I think it damnable!
I ne'er have sung the songs of peace or war;
The century's shame does not belong to me.
'Tis better if 'tis right, then worse if wrong.
All ask I is that I may have repose
Amid the tumult, and fear not the time
When an opinion will become remorse.

You ask me if I love my fatherland.
This I admit, and more, for Spain I love,
Turkey and Italy, and even Greece,
Nor Persia I dislike, think the Hindus
Are very honest fellows, who can drink as we.
Cities I hate, the pavements, tenements,
All that leads to foul gregariousness;
To live between four doleful, smothering walls,
Head under beam and feet above a grave.

You ask me if I'm not a Catholic.
I answer, Yes—yet love the god Nesu;
Tartak and Pimpocan seem faultless, too;
What say you of Parabavastuw?
Bida I like; Khoda's a fellow good;
And as for Kichatan, I nothing have to say;
Fierce Michapous is yet a handsome god.
Lawyers and liars and hypocrites I hate;
They serve Pimpocan, or Mahomet false.
You may for me assure their ministers
That where I go I know not, nor do care.

You ask me if I love fair wisdom's ways.
Why, yes, indeed, and also a good smoke.
I love Bordeaux, especially when it's old,
And all true wines, for they sweet love create.
I hate the bigots—the deceitful race,
Of hypocrites of manner, insolents,
Who don their virtues with their white kid gloves.
Satan was old when he became a monk.
I'll be so old, when that day will arrive,
That it will be the day on which I've died.

You ask me if I love sweet nature's moods.
Yes; and love also the enamouring arts.
Venus to me is something marvelous.
Is not a living woman of fine form
Better than purest marble, you will say?
The woman speaks, 'tis true; the sweet statue
Is silent, and the silence I prefer.
I hate the whining of ecstatic bards,
Heroes of landscapes, lakes, of small cascades,
That breed without a name, which can not move
Without a flood of verses, tears, and notes.
Nature is doubtless as she seems to us.
Perchance, indeed, they nature understand,
But they are still to me inscrutable.

Do I love riches, you inquire of me.
Yes; and I also love small fortunes, too,
But, above all, I love my mistresses;

Fortune to me is only liberty.
She gives the power of moving o'er the world;
Soon as possessed she must be answered for;
Her greatest boon is freedom to the will.
I hate flat feet as I hate covetousness!
Give me the poaching highwayman instead.
I hate the gilded wind that fills the fool;
In hundred years, I fear, it may be said
Our century of gold was only brass.

You ask me if there's anything I love.
To this I answer you as Hamlet would;
Doubt his Ophelia all that you may please,
Doubt the sky's light, the perfume of the rose;
Doubt virtue, yea, doubt day and night;
Doubt all the world, but never doubt of love.
To that, my dear, pray turn, as heliotrope,
Which dies, with eyes fixed on belovèd sun,
And, like the misanthrope, prefer to all
My love's sweet song and that of King Henri.
Doubt, if you wish, the creature that you love,
Woman, or dog, but not sweet love itself.
Love is to soul as sunlight to the world.
To love is great; the mistress matters not.
What of the flask, if wine intoxicates?
Make life a dream without awakening.
If true that Schiller but Amelia loved,
Goethe but Christiane; Julia, Rousseau.
May earth be light above them! They have loved!

I fear, my friend, you find my rhymes are bad;
There are some things in which I'm not reformed.
I have no more a system, and love ease;
I always thought it shameful, lines to pad.
As to some folk that ply that handicraft,
I see resemblance to a carpenter.
To the new poets glory, who give rhyme
One letter more than formerly required.
Bravo! 'Tis one more nail on which hangs thought.
The olden liberty Voltaire decreed
Was hitherto but good for feeble minds.
A cry of pain ran once through Italy
When, at the altars, Angelo expired.
With dying century came melancholy,
As a presentiment to shake old age.
Art-loving Angelo had left the earth,
Seeking some other heaven, as nursling seeks
The lips and breast of mother, its dear friend.
Art fell with him, and his resounding name
The Tuscans hold in deathless memory.
To-day fair art is dead; she reigns no more.
Now literature a thousand reasons hath
To speak of murders, of the drowned, the dead.
Describing wantons, she is waxing fat;
Dwelling in sewers, now her soul's decayed.

Hail, banal soul in tatters well-befouled,
In having wooed you I must tell the truth.

I want to introduce your better parts,
To speak of you as art, where you have taught
The world to think you but a *chiffonnier.*
An artist is a man; he writes for men;
Priest of the temple, he has liberty;
His tripod is the universe, his theme is life;
For incense, pain, and love, and harmony;
The heart his victim, and the truth his god.
The artist is a soldier, who deserts
The ranks of life, that, on his own account,
By one of divers roads, he may command.
The one, as Calderon or as Mérimée,
Covers reality with leaden mask.
He shapes at first the human silhouette,
With stony stare, and makes a mold of it,
From which comes forth a naked effigy,
Hard as the plaster that has filled the cast,
Hard as the bronze of it, as hard as gold;
And what results from such a somber mask,
Seek you the moral, the philosophy,
Of classic, hieratic strenuousness?
The form is to be worshiped, not the soul,
And to the reader this excuse is given;
Dream, if you will, but this is all he was.
The other Shakespeare, or the great Racine,
Ascends the tripod, and, with lamp in hand,
Writes with gold pen the story of the heart.
For you he searches it, that he may write
All he has felt, and what he there has found;
Still more, in finding it, what he has dreamed:

Action for him is but a mold for thought.
Hamlet kills Clodius, and Duncan, Macbeth.
What matters cause of strife, if flash of sword
Can show us, in the dark, the bloody face?
The first displays to you a skeleton;
You think, how beautiful, if clothed with flesh,
With all the supple muscles of th' athlete.
Such bones so gracious might be thus o'erlaid.
The second doth unfold a glittering robe,
Muscles unconquered, flesh that palpitates,
And leaves you guessing of what hidden force
Gives life to such an outward pageant.
The former sees effect, the latter cause.
Upon that double law the whole world rests,
And God alone can see it all at once.

For me, when that I see, I warn you, friend,
My vision really is never much;
I love to see too clearly to see long.
" Man, he delights me not, nor woman, yet."
But were I free to choose a certain route,
I'd choose the latter, and would drown, no doubt.

I'm in a humor now to dream a lot,
But here I stop, avoiding proving it.

I know not whither leads this ceaseless talk;
I wished to write a word to dedicate
My poem to my honorable friend,
Monsieur—and so forth, it is put always,

And then long-winded adulation flows,
I've made mine rather long, I must confess.
Some may imagine I have preface writ.
I never read them; nor do you, I think.

INVOCATION

To love, to drink, to hunt, ah, such is life
For sons of Tyrol, heroic and proud!
Brave mountaineers like eagles bold and free!
Sky, where the sun disdains the sunken plain,
That peaceful ocean, whose great waves are hills!
Peopled with echoes, sympathetic sky.
The pirate of the mountains whistling goes,
Who to the winds throws heart, and careless
song;
And distant Venice his horizon gilds,
Rugged Helvetia guards his country-side.
The south wind brings thee beauty, my Tyrol,
The north winds bring thee Liberty!

Hail, land of ice! enthroned among the clouds,
Land of the wanderer and traveling deer,
Land without olive-trees, where grow no vines,
Where harvests do not gladden thee with cheer;
Mother, thy nurslings drain a flinty breast,
But still they love thee. 'Neath the bluish snow,
By misty lakes their chalets greet the sun,
That does not tan the white arms of the maid.

Hail, noble land! Simple and naive art thou,
A busy land that does not love the arts,
Nor can the effeminate dreamer solace thee;
Both love and war alone strive on thy soil.
One grows not old in thy long afternoons.
And if at times thy children, in the vales,
Mingle a song with sighing of the reeds,
It proves them songsters, like the merry birds.
What hast thou, Tyrol? Neither gods, nor wealth,
Nor poets, temples, nor great palaces,
But that great love known by the splendid name
Of Liberty! What matters to the mountaineer
For what Germanic despot, as a slave,
The plainsman tears the furrow deep and wide?
His trade is not to drag the weary plow;
He sleeps upon the snow, dines when he kills,
And breathes the air of heaven upon his hills.

The air of heaven, pure as the flame of fire!
Yes, Liberty in cities dies of filth.
Vainly you plant her in your civil wars,
Vainly you sow her even on your tombs;
That tree with emerald boughs grows not so low,
But on the mountain height she stands supreme!

Would you be free, then climb to Liberty!
Climb to her, dreamers—she will not descend!
Take gripping sandal and the ferruled pick;
And make a pilgrimage to Liberty.

With every step the nearer she'll appear,
If in your heart you'll feel her mighty throbs.
Tyrol, no bard has sung thy mountain lands;
Our golden muses need the citron-trees.
Thou art not commonplace, if poverty
Extends lean hand to hospitality.
Poor hostess, welcome me! for thou art worth
All Italy, and though a Messaline in rags,
For me I find thee virginal; that grace
Is mine; for I to slake my thirst withal,
I need a stainless stream, both clear and cold,
But wandering dogs go to the water-trough.
I love thee; who can touch thy stainless robe?
And not like Naples, visitors o'errun,
With ciceroni for thy panderers.

The snow falls gently on thy shoulders bare.
Be mine. I love thee. When virginity
Departs from heaven, I shall statues love;
Marble is better far than Phryne soiled,
With whom the famished seek their lewdest meals,
Who makes the public street pass through her bed,
Who has not time to put her girdle on
'Twixt noontide loves and those of sable night!

ACT THE FIRST

Scene I

(*A public square. A fire blazing in the midst. Hunters, Frank.*)

Chorus. As pale as love, and all with tears bedecked,
The silvery feet of evening tread the dew.
Mists climb the sky, the sun in flight departs.
Let pleasure wake, the night shall be its dawn!
Diana guarded our swift chase afar.
Beneath the loads we bend with sluggish steps.
For us, repose and rest! The glass we lift,
Our signal, brethren, to begin the feast.
Frank. For me, I've nothing killed, and bramble, briar,
Have torn my hands. Upon the dust my hound
Could lick in blood the traces of my steps.
Chorus. The days, my friend, do differ each from each.
Draw nigh, make one in our glad company.
Good friendship, sir, is like the merry cup
That by the fireside goes from hand to hand.
One will drink deep his weal, another wo,
And Heaven oblivion casts into the wine;
I'm happy now to-night, to-morrow you.
Frank. My woes are mine, and yours how could I take?

I have not learned to live at others' cost;
For that I'll stay till men cut off their hands;
I sure would make a sorry parasite;
For only fasting long, and famine's curse,
Shall make me run to scent the steam of feasts.
I am the better marksman, keen of eye,
And why do I find nothing? Tell me that.
Am I a scarecrow? Opportunity,
The strumpet, gets so limping lame and sore,
And then so bald, by dint of running loose,
That none can catch her, seize her neck and nape!
Like you, I hunt the roebuck near and far;
My neighbor shoots it ere my eye beholds.
Chorus. And if your neighbor, why reproaches loud?
Community engenders human strength.
Anger not God. It is the reed that bends;
The man lacks patience and the lamp lacks oil,
And pride in anger counsels very ill.
Frank. Community—a word to stir my gall!
Nor yet am I brought down to beg for bread.
Mordieu! Here's gold, my men, enough to live!
Mankind's old foe may follow, if he will;
I'll make him trot a very pretty race.
A man must be a bastard if he tacks
His own to others' woes. Am I a slave?
The social compact's no affair of mine;
I did not sign it in my mother's womb.
If others little own, should I own naught?
Of God you talk, blaspheming mine the while.

Ah, pride is woman's purity, the strength
Of warriors, as of martyrs on the cross,
And pride is virtue, honor, genius too;
It is the trace of beauty left in life;
Uprightness in the poor, greatness in kings.
I fain would know regarding mortal men,
And first myself, what end of good we serve.
You see pale skies beyond the lofty hills?
From morn to eve, all round the toiling throng
Some vast alembics which men cities name;
Intrigues and passions, perils, joys of sense,
All life is there. All issues forth, comes in.
Elsewhere dispersed, here all is centered firm.
His life man presses, he would quaff its wine,
Like those who crush and press the clustered grape.

Chorus. Some dire ambition, Frank, your soul consumes.

Your haughty poverty abhors itself;
Yourself you hate, in all this kinglike pride,
And hate your neighbor who is like to you.
Speak, vagabond, love you your sire, your land?
At morning's breath feel you a thrilling heart?
And do you kneel before you sink to sleep?
What blood is yours, that you can move through life
A man of bronze, so that pure friendship, love
And passion, confidence and pity sweet,
Must merely glide upon a senseless flint,
Like drops of water on the marble smooth.

Ill lives the wretch who lives but for himself.
The soul, a ray from heaven, unseen, in thrall,
In donjons dim, is racked with deadly throes.
She seeks her sisters from her exile's gloom;
And tears and songs eternal voices are,
Of those God's daughters calling o'er the gulfs.
Frank. Sing, then, and weep, if such should be your will!
My malediction is no awful thing.
I give it to you, such as it may be.
A toast—a toast our feast to dedicate!
And I propose— (*Taking a glass.*)
Bad luck to new-born babes!
A curse on labor! cursed be dreams of hope!
The seed, where rolls the sweat of bony arms!
Cursed be the ties of blood, the ties of life!
Cursed the family and society!
A curse on homes, and on the city too,
And malediction on our fatherland!
Another Chorus (issuing from a house). Who speaks—who comes to fling against our roof
Such monstrous, clamoring cries,
And sound to us such hideous trumpet-calls
Of malediction? Frank, speak out! 'Tis you?
You're but a sluggard filled with envious pride.
What right, to come and torture honest folks?
You hate our calling, Judas; we hate yours.
And why not wander seeking fortune's trail,
If you do find a father's roof too low?
Your pride is but a coffin, leaden sealed.

You think you punish Heaven with petty spite;
And this, your utmost power, to stretch these arms,
And curse a God whose eye rests not on you.
Remember, now, that prince of blasphemy,
The most outrageous fiend of all the fallen,
Was flung from heaven ere he 'gan to curse.
All the hunters. Now why decline a place to feast with us?
Frank (*to one*). Alas! my noble lord, one pittance grant,
One mite, because I hunger and I thirst;
A little money, just to purchase bread.
Chorus. Are you a clown, to mock your own distress?
Frank. My lord, a charming mistress sure you have;
I could extol her, singing, turn by turn,
A golden mean of innocence and love.
A poor man ought to cheer his host at least,
For, after all, if poor, he is to blame.
But think you it is nice and generous
To fling some paving-stones on drowning men?
Wake not to vengeance the unfortunate.
Chorus. Some somber demon preys upon your soul;
Your taunter is too grim, disconsolate.
Frank. For if these wretches cherish aught of pride,
If not a mold of merely woman clay,

If heart they have and hands, or simply wear
By chance some weapon hanging at the belt.
Chorus. What meaneth this—a challenge for a fight?
Frank. A poniard may be blunted, thrusts fall short,
But if the poor man, sick of weary life,
Resents an insult, grasps a burning brand,
And flies to hurl its fire against his home!
(*Picks up a blazing log and tosses it on his cottage.*)
The hour is his: it is his father's home,
His own home, too, his property, the tomb
Of day-dreams and of lonely tears at night.
The fire must stay there, for he kindled it.
Chorus. Does fever craze you? Hold, incendiary!
With one foul cast you're burning all our town!
Hold! Where, to-morrow, shall our children rest?
Frank. Behold me on the threshold, sword in hand.
Come on, and were you now a host in arms,
And were the world in smoke to disappear,
Thunder and blood, I'll make a ghost of him.
The first that dare to throw one drop upon
The dunghill straw! Think you, if I'm a plague,
To chase me with impunity, a hound?
Did you not bid me go, my fortune seek?

I go. You bade me. You would never go.
'Tis I who act. Departing, I illuminate,
To have the pleasure, as I wend my way,
To see your town in case I want to look.
Here is no deed of futile madness. They
Who call me idle, and a man of pride,
Are truthful. But so long as stands this thatch,
This cottage, it will stand my monument.
This little house, these walls of stone, good sirs,
To me were patrimony, and enough
It is to make one love his dunghill, there
For twenty years to sleep. I burn it now!
'Tis I, my phantom scattered to the winds.
And now, ye winds, you only have to blow:
Full often, on tempestuous nights, you come
To shake my door, to call aloud my name.
I come, my brothers, now, deliver you
My head. I go, and God shall show these feet
A path, or Chance, if Chance should be our God.

Scene II

(*A plain. Frank, meeting a young girl.*)

She. Good evening, Frank. Where go you? Lone the plain.
Your dogs, and where are they, rash mountaineer?

Frank. Good evening, Déidamia. You have left
Your mother where, my prudent? Why so late?

She. I gathered, on my way, a bunch of flowers—
Sweet roses. Take them all, to bring you luck.
(*She throws them to him.*)
Frank. How gaily she runs off! Her mother lives
Near me, and I have seen the child grow up
In beauty innocent. She loves me not.

Scene III

(*Dawn. A hollow road in a forest.*)

Frank (*sitting on the grass*). And when they speak the latest word, and when
The paltry hut of luckless, begging Frank,
Is turned to cinders, scattered to the winds,
Can any dream his fate? That doom is death!
But if he be too young, and loath to die?
Ah, misery! and havoc! Fate strides on.
A Voice (*in a dream*).
Two paths there are in life;
A lonely path of flowers,
Which winds through shady bowers.
Exempt from grief, from strife;
We pass, and hardly see
The brooklet in the plain,
Which noiseless seems to flee,
The sands which ne'er retain.
Another like the torrent falls
In everlasting onward dole,

Which 'neath the feet of prodigals
Ixion's rock unceasing roll.
One is confined, the other broad;
One dies, the other then begins;
Of patience one, the narrow road;
That other, of ambition's sins.

Frank (*in a dream*).

Ye spirits, if ye would forebode my end,
Wherefore should my Creator, God,
Both give me life, and after downward send
Those sparks divine, that swiftly burn
My heart and life to ashes turn?
Wherefore the fire where salamanders bide?
Wherefore feel I this heart amazed complain?
'Tis weak the quivering flashes to constrain,
Which, heaven-descended, far above would ride.

Voice.

They who in mad ambition's fires consume,
Who seek to court the mighty ones of earth,
They in their pride have taken verge and room
To spurn sweet love and all her antic mirth,
Those unlamented and without desire,
Who die forgotten in some woman's arms,
They, mountaineer, with all the soul's bright fire,
Have jeered at glory, scorned its joys' alarms.

Frank.

You talk of greatness, then, of glory prate.
Shall I win treasure? Shall men's memories keep
To distant times a loving thought of me?

Make answer—answer ere the trance abate.
Unfold the things to happen, but that sleep
Within futurity's Cimmerian sea.
Voice.
This is the hour when, free from anxious thought,
You used to wake, your study to resume,
And meditation, which your labors brought
In lone pursuit of love chimeras' doom.
You went unto that solitary cot,
Where Déidamia watched beside the hearth.
Coming, you sat above the embers hot,
And told of woes soon lost in peaceful mirth.
You had no hopes, and in the solitude
You loved like children; habits quickly bring
Each day their teaching, ope at every word.
Love's path; o'er each poor heart is habit king.
Frank. Too late, ye spirits; I have burned my cot.
Voice. Repent! repent!
Frank. No, no! There's naught—no hope survives.
Voice. Repent! repent!
Frank. I've curses on my father brought.
Voice. Awake! arise! for fortune's hour has come.

(*The sun appears. Frank awakens. Stranio, young Count Palatine, and his mistress, Monna Belcolore, ride by.*)

Stranio. Get up, you churl, and let me pass!

Frank. You wait until I rise. Now, have a care!

Stranio. Up, hound. Make haste, or never rise again!

Frank. So-ho! My man and horse, you're not to pass.
Unsheathe that sword, or forfeit is your life!
Come, parry that!

(*They fight; Stranio falls.*)

Belcolore. What is the name you bear?

Frank. Charles Frank.

Belcolore. I like you. Well you fight for life.
Good sir, pray tell me where your home may be.

Frank. The Tyrol, madame, is my native land.

Belcolore. They tell me I am handsome; now, do you
Agree with such a verdict?

Frank. No star more lovely.

Belcolore. I'm but eighteen years old—and you?

Frank. Twenty am I.

Belcolore. Then mount the horse; and come and sup with me!

(*Exeunt.*)

"Mount the horse and come to supper with me"

Frank. You wait until I rise. Now, have a care!

Stranio. Up, hound. Make haste, or never rise again!

Frank. So-ho! My man and horse, you're not to pass.
Unsheathe that sword, or forfeit is your life!
Come, parry that!

(*They fight; Stranio falls.*)

Belcolore. What is the name you bear?

Frank. Charles Frank.

Belcolore. I like you. Well you fight for life.
Good sir, pray tell me where your home may be.

Frank. The Tyrol, madame, is my native land.

Belcolore. They tell me I am handsome; now, do you
Agree with such a verdict?

Frank No star more lovely.

Belcolore. I'm but eighteen years old—and you?

Frank. Twenty am I.

Belcolore. Then mount the horse; and come and sup with me!

(*Exeunt.*)

ACT THE SECOND

Scene I

(*A Salon.*)

Frank (*before a table covered with gold coin*).

Of hidden threads controlling human life
Thou, gold, art subtlest and most marvelous!
O primal element, tear stolen from the sun!
Sole, ever-living God among false gods,
Medusa, that dost change the heart to stone,
And turn to dust, beneath the rose-queen's feet,
The robe of innocent virginity!
Sublime in thy corruption, our will's key,
Accept my wonder! Speak, aloud proclaim,
That honor is a word, and virtue vain;
That man possessing thee is noble, good;
That naught but thou is true. Delirium
Could not invent so wild, audacious dreams,
So monstrous, far removed from nature's book,
That thou couldst not with dreadful lever's force
Lift up an universe to make them true.
And yet, how many men have never seen,
Except in fancy, what I see! My heart,
Enchanted, plunges in this glittering heap!
All, all is mine; and spheres and worlds shall dance

A thousand whirling rounds before the sun
Again shall see another stroke like this.
My heart is overwhelmed. I comprehend
What makes the dying, when death's chill doth seize,
Gloat in delight o'er hoarded gold,
And why old men hide treasure in the earth.
(*He counts.*)
'Tis fifteen thousand, and the rest assured.
What fate hath brought me this adventure strange?
What should I do to-day, to-morrow what,
Had crazy Stranio never crossed my path?
I slay the palatine, his mistress win;
Drink deep with her; they make me gamble, too.
I should have lost, I gain—wine's rapture this.
I gain; I quit the board. The stroke's from God.
(*Opens a window.*)
Oh, could I see myself pass by below.
As I looked yesterday, I, Frank, the lord
Of this abode, possessing treasured gold,
Behold pass by poor Frank, the hunter of the hare,
He stretches out his hand, I fling him gold.
Here, Frank, poor beggar, take, poor wretch, all this.
(*He takes a handful of gold.*)
Indeed, it seems to me that heaven and earth
Bestowed on me no more than what's my due,
And that since yesterday I own the world.

Scene II

(*A road. Mountaineers passing. Hunting-song in the distance.*)

Bold huntsman, what see you above the vale?
My hounds will scratch the ground to find the trail.
Up, up, my horsemen! 'Tis the chamois' trace;
The chamois rises. Fair my mistress' face!
The chamois trembling flies. God keep my dear!
The chamois checks the hounds in woodland near.
Ah, could I touch her hand, my charming sweet,
Across the lawn the pack and chamois fleet:
Hallali, my comrades, victory is mine;
How sweet my mistress, and her eye how fine!
Chorus. Here in this palace, friends, where now we stand,
Abode the first, the last man of the land—
Frank, who for twenty years a huntsman great,
Endures to live to-day a strumpet's mate.
What life is this? By night, by day, a thrall;
What solitude, death's image rules the hall;
And now and then, when misty night descends,
An unknown woman by a window bends,
And raven tresses to the north wind lends.
Frank is no more. From mount he disappears,
And could he wake, perchance, in dream, he hears

The voice of time gone by! Tears, brothers—
weep!
He never comes gay *hallali* to keep
With hounds about him on the blood-stained
grass,
Bare armed, unseam the bucks to death that pass,
And at the meet to rest and drink the snow,
Those rills that, pure of foot, from ice-fields flow.
(*Exeunt.*)

Scene III

(*Night. Terrace near a road. Monna Belcolore and Frank in a kiosk.*)

Belcolore. Sleep, pallid one; your faintness
put to flight
Until the morrow, heart on mistress' breast.
Your strength is going, and day comes apace.
Your beauteous eyes of blue are sinking. Sleep.
Frank. The day comes not. Awake, the fever
burns!
O Belcolore, this fire consumes my veins!
My heart with love is languishing; time flies;
And what to me this sky, its night or day?
Belcolore. Ah, Carlo mine, your head doth reel
and sink,
And fall upon your hands as o'er your cup
You slumber, seem to die and wander far.
Ah, weak as woman, you shall yield and sleep.

Frank (*aside*). Yes, day will dawn. O beautiful, my sweet!
I sink to death; strength gone, my youth expires.
A shadow of myself, a remnant vain,
A looming specter of myself at night.
O God! So young yestreen, to-day I fail.
You slew me, and your body is my tomb.
My kisses wore the threshold of that tomb;
My winding-sheet your tresses black and long.
Those torches take away; the window ope,
Let sunlight in; this sun may be my last.
The sun shall find me, fain to bid farewell
To that pure sky that wins me to my God!
Belcolore. Why keep me, then, if I have brought you death?
Must you for two nights, die, in pleasure spent?
Frank. Of dying every happy lover speaks.
You slew me! From that morn my eye met yours,
My life began. The rest was not a life,
And never has my heart throbbed save on yours.
You gave me wealth, you opened wide the world!
Behold, my love! superbly fair this night!
Before such a witness, what is all we say,
If soul speak clear and soul fit answer give?
Mute is the angel of the night of love.
Belcolore. Last night at lansquenet you won what gold?
Frank. I care not, know not. Memory disappears.

Now, now! Unto my arms! Let me adore!
Arouse me, speak! Recount your history.
Night splendid, night superb! My tears burst forth.
Belcolore. You wish to wake, then rather tell your life.
Frank. We are so happy that I would forget.
What could I say, in faith? Such stories are
The tale of deeds and dangers whose empire
Is sovereign master of oblivion's hour.
Naught have I done, naught seen; what could I tell?
The story of my life, the story of my heart,
A country strange where journeying I have gone.
Hold fast my brow, for strength is ebbing fast.
Speak, speak, for I would listen to the end.
Now, then, one pretty kiss; I give, you take.
One kiss for life of yours, and tell me all.
Belcolore (*sighing*). Not always have I lived as men may think.
My family in Florence once was great,
But ruin came, and bitter need compelled
This life I lead of honor lost, of shame.
My heart was never formed——
Frank (*turning his back*). Always the same old tale!
This is, I guess, the twentieth puss of whom
I ask it, and each time the same old song!
Whom have they seen to fool and make believe?

My God! what miry bog has caught me now?
I thought this girl to be too fine for this.
Belcolore. My father died——
Frank. Enough, I pray!
The rest I mean to get from Julie there,
Near any cross-roads where she waits for men.
(*Both remain silent for a time.*)
Tell me, that famous day when you rode up,
What hazard, or what sympathy, or what
Queer fancy, prompted you to lead me off?
I wore poor, dusty garments stained with blood.
Belcolore. I told you once that you fought well the fight.
Frank. Sincerely, now, you liked a robust man.
Your eyes for once, my child, did not read right.
A woman loves a burden-porter, yes;
The taste, like other tastes, in nature lies.
Were I a woman, fond of strong men too,
I should not run at random in my quest;
I should go forth among pothouses, where
From half a dozen wrestlers I might choose.
Another word: the man I took you from
Was keeping you, no doubt, to please his lust?
Belcolore. Of course.
Frank. Were you not crushed by his untimely death?
The rattle in his throat—a dreadful sound;
The left eye out! The pommel of the sword
Had gashed his brow, the throat itself was pierced.

Beneath the horses' hoofs he lay a corse!
Like the torn ivy, which itself will drag
To cling once more upon a shaggy oak,
That wretch would drag and writhe and cling
To what was life. And you, a murd'ress dark,
Felt neither soul nor heart within you sink?
You spoke no word nor moved one little step?
Belcolore. Do you pretend I have a heart of stone?
Frank. Even what I utter can not stir the heart!
Belcolore. I hate coarse words. My manner elsewhere leads,
And when one word I need, I speak not two.
You, Frank, have ceased to love.
Frank. I? I adore,
Fair Belcolore! I've read, it was some book
That, for two happy loves, the time most sweet
Was 'mid the whisperings of a sleepless night,
Amid intoxication after love,
With senses peaceful and desire forgot;
When hand in hand, and soul embracing soul,
Two loves are one, and being 'neath the spell
Of balmy happiness that breeds one dream;
When she, as friend, put off the mistress, bids
Her well-beloved explore her deeper heart,
As a cool spring wherein the wave is calm
Betrays profound delights in purity.
Then know we all the price of her we love;
Then we exult that we have chosen well;

Then gentle dreams may come and close our eyes.
O Belcolore, my friend, is this not truth?
Belcolore. What nonsense!
Frank. We are happy, are we not?
I think 'tis time to regulate our life,
Count not on hazard, games of cheating, chance;
We can at first take in some good old man,
Who furnishes the wine and furniture;
The night for him, and I will take the day.
From time to time you play a trick or so—
I mean a trick that's nice, adroit, that pays.
The friends he has shall drink his reddest wine.
The hunter you, and I will be the hound.
And, first of all, a maid, discretion's self,
Quite apt to grease the hinges of a door.
We pay her richly, as she's all for sale.
For me, I'll turn attendant cavalier.
The household of us twain will be a pearl.
Belcolore. You either must leave off your pleasantry,
Or surely I'll have done with you forthwith.
Make peace, will you? I'm not the one to sulk.
Come, kiss me, Frank.
Frank. Ugly wanton, she . . .
My God! But two days more, my doom were sealed.
(*He leans over the terrace. A soldier rides by.*)

Soldier. A soldier riding on his way
At lightning flash and thunder laughs.
One hand the sword will oft display,
One hand the glass from which he quaffs.
And when he dies he comes to earth
Like any lord of lofty birth.
His heart is in his lassie's hand!
His arm defends the fatherland!
His head the Kaiser shall command!
Frank. Holla, good friend! A word with you.
You seem
A sturdy blade, a jolly temper yours.
Your brave companions march they to the wars?
Where stands our Kaiser? In what fortress now?
Soldier. At Glurens. Two days more, and war begins.
I'm marching now to join my company.
Frank. Is it from plain, or from the hills, you come?
You know my father? Have you heard my name?
Soldier. I know you well, the village whence you are,
The mill hard by. And what's your business here?
You march with us?
Frank (*coming down*). Yes, truly, here am I.
My traveler's garb I have not donned, but you
When we ride in, will lend me some old sword.

(*To Belcolore.*)
Adieu, my child, I can not sup with you.
Soldier. They'll give you armor. On my horse's croup!
Parbleu! My comrade, now our troop's complete.
Oh, yes! But tell me, as we ride along,
If one fine evening you . . .
(*They gallop off.*)
Belcolore (*on the balcony*). I love him still!

ACT THE THIRD

Scene I

(*Before a palace. Glurens.*)

Soldiers (*in chorus*). Like hurrying snowflakes driven by the gale,
That swinging bound from ice-fields to the vale,
The Tyrolese and comrades Palatines
Come dashing forth to greet the battle signs.
But now the Kaiser doth the war-dogs hold;
The wantons on their gates their banners fold.
But harken! hark! The bugle bids good-by;
Our ancient realm doth call her barons nigh.
Mount, mount, ye hunters of the frightened stag!
Mount, sons of Rhine! mount, bearers of the flag!

Your children come to nestle near your heart.
Off with that armor! Kiss! Ye ne'er shall part.
Rest, soldiers, now. There stands the home of Frank,
That warrior captain, him of matchless rank;
Our Kaiser old has clasped him in his arms.
The people crowned him after war's alarms.
Within these halls he sups with comrades round;
No worthier knight, no glory better found.
At Innsbruck he alone black eagle won,
In thickest fight and 'fore the mouth of gun.
Full twenty times his men amid the fray
Had thought him dead, of battle's storm the prey.
The brave he led, advancing like the scout,
Plunged in the fire, and, diver-like, came out.
Three bullets struck him, falling in his track;
His life seemed lost; Dame Fortune gave it back.
Enough he spent of life to win the Cross,
And every spur with gold-red blood emboss.

What does she here, the dark Italian girl,
Running apace, while locks disheveled whirl?
Where are you running now? You can not pass.
(*Enter Belcolore.*)
Belcolore. Is this the house in which your captain lives?
Soldiers. It is; but speak to the lieutenant there.
Lieutenant. We can not let you pass, my princess fair.

Belcolore. But, really, I must straightway enter in.
My name is Belcolore—his mistress now.
Lieutenant. Oh, yes, my dear, I recognize you well.
It drives me to despair. My orders stand.
If Frank's your lover, good. I don't think so,
For that would be an honor not for you.
Belcolore. If not my lover now, he shall be soon—
This evening. Understand, I love him still.
Once left, if you would know, again I come.
Soldiers. Pert little minx, she has a face of bronze.
Runs after folks, stiletto in her hand!
Belcolore. It is a torch to light me on my way.
Come, then, step out, and point me to the gate.
Lieutenant. My beauty, since you will, behold the gate.
Approach, but with a man for escort go.
The woman's sure a demon incarnate.
(*Belcolore goes in. Frank, crowned, on horseback. Enters.*)
People's chorus. With laurels crowned, you are, in sooth, the man
To ride among us on triumphant steed.
The war is ended now. Our emperor can
Think him your debtor in his need.

Dismount! Within the amphitheater rest.
O victor wrestler! blood flows yet: wash clean
that breast.
(*He dismounts.*)
Knights' chorus. By fortune blest, still young,
you win renown,
And glory slowly ripening for the tomb;
The earth, that saw you, from her memory flings
down
The shades of heroes once in bloom.
Like Beatrice at Purgatory's gates,
Your wings seek newer paths, more glorious
fates.
The People. Come on! The splendid day, a
festival,
Must finish splendidly in feasts of joy.
Your guests, their heads have wreathed in palace
hall;
Your father waits to clasp his gallant boy.
Why linger more? Go in! they've laid the
board;
Go in! the gates stand wide, and night is lord.
(*They go in.*)

Scene II

(*Frank and Gunther, alone.*)

Gunther. Under that portico you're loath to
move,
O master mine, amid the public feast,

You whose unerring blade has felled our foes.
Have you explored your friends' most inmost heart?
Alas! true friends are mute amid the crowd;
To speak, they wait till all the flood subsides.
My brother, master, they proclaim you king.
God willing, I, though old, can follow you,
The rising sun, if Heaven shall give me life.
I am a soldier only, grant me grace.
My irksome friendship wounds you, O my lord!
Will you not share with them the common mirth?
What hinders? Is it weariness of joy?
But toil and danger make carousals gay.
Chorus (*within*). A song to make the welkin ring,
As well becomes our drinking feats.
Long life to all whom wine disarms!
The days of battle have their charms,
But peace likewise has many sweets.
Gunther. Dear captain, why a face so dark and grim?
The wine is bubbling round the board. The songs
Of merrymakers come, and shadows flit
Behind broad windows where the lamplight beams.
Chorus. Why linger, Frank? If, Gunther, this our song
Beneath this roof affrights not your gray head,

A greeting take, a drink both deep and long.
Age, we forget the years that some men dread.
Gunther. A deathlike pallor sits upon your brow,
My lord! Your spirit, captive to dark care,
Hears not my voice. What cloud of gloom is this?
What dreams of awful night enshroud your soul?
Frank. Wayworn, and tired of war and all its noise,
Apart I rode this morn far from our camp;
My horse went slowly down a dusty path.
I halted, thirsting for the flowing well,
And saw a girl asleep upon the grass,
A milkmaid child of fifteen summers, bright.
I knew her, Gunther, I, her mother's friend,
And pleasant days I've spent with country folk.
The angel sleeping lay, with lips half-closed—
The lips of children open like the rose,
To meet the breath of night. Her little arms
Within a basket thrust; her open hands
Were covered o'er with herbs and eglantine,
She lay, while rocked her sense in childish dreams.
I knew them not. Perhaps o'ercome by sleep,
She lost her song, begun, not ended then.
So sings the bird that poises on the flower.
None near, I took her hands within my own,
And, bending down, I would not vex her sleep.

O friend, I put my lips against her lips,
Then I departed, weeping like a child.

ACT THE FOURTH

Scene I

(*Before the palace. Gate draped in black. A catafalque. Frank disguised as a monk; two servants.*)

Frank. Bring here the tapers, and the coffin bring.
Forget not. It is I whom men entomb;
I, Frank, dead in a duel yesterday.
No word, nor look, nor any shoulder shrug.
No start, no stir, not one, to mar your parts.
My will! This bear in mind.
(*Servants depart.*)
Eternal Judge,
I come to question. Fever thrills shake not
This bosom, for with no intent I come
To jest with death profanely. Act of mine
No counselor's advice. Reply to me.
The smith the silver on the stone doth ring;
To him that sound reveals how pure the mint.
Like him, I seek an echo from my life,
When I shall smite this chilling monument.
Day breaks, and soldiers rise to leave their tents;

The fireplace crackles now with branches green;
The fisher and the smuggler ply the oar;
Each fears, each hopes, with palpitating heart.
What noisy agitation stirs the town!
Humanity, the bustling monster, wakes!
'Neath myriad roofs what vital bodies stir!
Ah, sweating animals! oh, toil and blood!
Why sleepest thou, and wherefore travail, toil,
Old monster with thy million feet? Art thou
Eternal as thou dreamest? This coffin is
Some inches longer than my cradle was.
Such difference! Ah, why doth mind
Rush first when body acts? Why in my breast
That busy worm that ever digs and mines,
Till earth sinks under foot, before the goal?
Chorus (*of people and soldiers*). That Frank
is dead, they say! When, then? The name
Of him who slew! The quarrel's cause! Now
fame
Is rumoring combats. Where and when the
fight?
Frank (*masked*). Frank's ear to sound is shut,
Frank's eye to light.
Chorus. If better land there be above our land;
If far from wind and storms thy soul can
stand,
Or, fluttering, hover o'er the mountain crest;
If curtains, purple, hide the burning breast
Of cloudland where repose from war's alarms
Warriors enshrined in panoply of gold,

Lean toward us, noble hearts, above the sky,
Behold thy comrades, how their swords they break
On this cold earth wherein his body lies!
Gunther (*running up*). So brave, so young, transported to the skies!
My Frank! Can this be true, thy death?
That my desire is granted but to live
To see thee win celestial meed at last!
My hair is white, and I am all alone!
And I was young, because thy youth sustained.
I loved but thee. Ah, age! Ah, misery!
My Frank, and shall I never see thee more?
Frank. I had forgotten Gunther, dear old friend!
Chorus. Muffle the drums, and let the priest appear.
Kneel, comrades, kneel! heads bare, and silence here.
The prayer for dead men let the priest intone.
We bear our captain to the tomb's dark stone.
He died a Christian, in a Christian land.
This body is his host's; his soul is God's.
Three Monks (*coming forward*). The Lord upon the eternal shade
Resteth now his burning eyes,
And sentinel in light arrayed
The righteous and the damned espies.
He knows who falleth in the path,
And when his prey he blasted hath,

Speaks to the woes his wrath doth make.
Count well the dead men that ye take!
Chorus. O Lord, my sins too great for mercy are!
Monks. To deepening battles he doth call;
Count chiefs without the funeral rite
Whose coffins are the entrails all
Of lion and of panther light;
The just may triumph or may fly;
Count, when the glaive is wipéd dry,
The dead men fallen like the rain
On mountain or on furrowed plain.
Chorus. O Lord, from temptation Thou deliver us!
Monks. For on the day of pity whole
My word, that teems with terror dread,
Shall slay the earth from pole to pole.
Again shall rise the gathered dead,
And from the abyss's empty home,
The victims frail shall falling come,
And dry, grant mercy wash sin now!
Shall show the strain upon his brow.
Chorus. My teeth shall gnash, and every bone grow dry.
Monks. Come from beneath, or from on high,
As rings the ancient prophet's cry,
Justice to each man shall be done,
So as his deed has justice won.
Then glory to our father God!
Though impious men have prospering trod,

Souls of the just in hope shall be.
All glory, hallowed Trinity!
Frank (*aside*). Atrocious work of mountebank, in truth!
O Thou, who hears, Intelligence supreme,
The God of vengeance like an idol made!
A rancorous torturer, that roasts and burns;
Fire and its terrors, scheme of vengeful Rome.
They love to tell you of the God-made man.
I rather recognize the man-made God.
Chorus. Our duty is not yet fulfilled;
We have besought forgiveness for his soul;
If one can tell the story of his life,
Stand forth and speak.
Frank (*aside*). In truth a sacrilegious task for us!
Officer (*stepping forth*). Soldiers and knights, stout comrades in the wars,
If ever man deserved tears in this world,
'Tis he who is no more. He was my friend.
Proud of my right of pride, I speak of him.
Born in a hovel of a hamlet mean,
Frank was a brother to the mountaineers,
A cherished son, of all the welcome guest.
Frank. In this you err. You did not know him well.
The neighborhood detested hunter Frank.
What man is here that from the village comes?
Ask him the truth. That village was my home.

People. Monk, interrupt not. 'Tis a friend that speaks.

Soldiers. Our man, in faith, possessed a soul of pride;
Loving his neighbor well, he showed it not.
One day he flung a brand upon his house.
The reason is to me a secret yet.

Officer. Let not his faults disturb his ashes now.
Doth it befit such witnesses to hear?
Soldiers, Frank felt his mission led elsewhere.
None prouder, none more fierce in battle's fray.
Such fierce persuasion, for who, more than he,
Proved eloquent at times when speaks the arm?
You know it, soldiers, I have fought for him,
And in my turn can say I, too, was one.
Ardor unequaled, courage naught could daunt,
Redoubtable he was, but better man.
A hero's soul! I know, for I have seen.

Frank. Mistaken, sir; you know him, but not well.
Frank was no more than an adventurer;
A madman's risks he took, his soldiers' life,
To court an honor which was not deserved.
Without a title born, from hovel sprung,
He wrought in combat as the gamester plays;
On death or fortune he had staked his all,
Such men defy the fates, a common sort;
They swarm in armies, convents, and in marts.
Think you this Frank was worth the fame he had?

Respected laws, gave to the Kaiser love?
Before he drew his sword, he lived awhile
With Belcolore to ply the pander's trade.
Can any one maintain the other side?
Soldiers. Faith! Since the hour he left his father's home,
The aforesaid Frank was journeyman at trades.
And Monna Belcolore, we know her well;
She lived with him. We saw her yesterday.
People. The monk shall speak.
Frank. Worse deeds our Frank has done.
Reduced his sire to utter beggary.
He needed money for his courtesan;
The little sum he had he flung to her.
What do you give to him who has profaned
The ashes of an honorable sire?
If guilty, then am I condemned to die!
People. Tell us the truth, you monk, and fearless speak.
Frank. But if the Tyrolese within this ring
Decide that I do right, then they are proud
To be as I, who call to witness God.
Tyrolese. That Frank is but a worthless wretch, we swear!
Frank. To-day he spurned a seat beside your board.
Do you remember it?
Soldiers. We curse him, too!
Frank. The day he burned his father's little cot——

Soldiers. The monk knows all.
Frank. And if, as people say,
He cut down Stranio in the road——
People. Stranio, Count Palatine, whom Brandel found
In the thick wood, and sleeping on a stone?
Frank. He is his slayer!
Soldiers. Vilest assassin! Murderer for gold!
Frank. His iron pride, have you forgotten that?
All. His ashes to the winds!
Frank. Incendiary!
Hamstring the parricide! and here
His coffin rend! (*He opens it.*)
People and Soldiers. The bier's an empty box.
Frank (*unmasking*). If it is empty, then is Frank alive.
Soldiers. Ha, Captain! You are here?
Frank (*to Lieutenant*). Give up your sword, Lieutenant; you have let the riot run.
Had I been dead, where now should I abide?
And know you not your very head's at stake?
You I arrest, and in the Kaiser's name.
March off your soldiers! To the camp away!
(*All go out silently.*)
Frank. I am undone. A burning thirst unquenched
Shall, while thy life endures, consume my frame.
My God! Such struggles, battles terrible,
Devotion infinite, a body scarred—

But nay; be calm, the time is not yet come.
Who walks from yonder? Belcolore, is't not?
(*Masks cover the bier. Belcolore, in black, kneels by the catafalque.*)
I see her drawing nigh, her very self—
The shape of beauty, shoulders firm of mold,
That throat of pride and ever unconcealed,
The locks combed round the bold and stupid brow,
With those two eyes that gloom as black as hell,
Behold the siren, harlot lent for hire.
A very sewer of exhausted life
To drain us men and suck away our blood;
A millstone hewn to crush us into brutes,
What strange, foul atmosphere we breathe beside
This monster that exhausts and charms us still!
See by her side destroying angels twain:
Death and voluptuousness, both doubly fierce.
I well remember that infernal joy
Of being ravaged while I ravished her,
And there she lay beside me, breathless, hot,
A creature wan and cloyed, with grinding teeth.
No heavenly moments—rather fits from hell,
Is this foul magnetism that from them springs.
My kisses woke in me desire to die.
Ah! woe to him who lets the lewd desire
Implant impurity within his breast!
The heart of virgin knight's a vase profound;
Let one first drop impure be poured in,

A sea might never wash away the stain.
The stain is in the depths of an abyss!
Whom do you weep, madame—is't for your spouse?
Belcolore. You speak the word. I'm widowed of one love.
Frank. Of yesterday. I see the weeds you wear are new.
The black becomes you.
Belcolore. Yesterday, for aye?
Frank. Forever, did you say? Ah, Belcolore,
Forever is an age.
Belcolore. Whence know you me?
Frank. From Naples. I one winter sought you there.
So beautiful is Naples and its sky!
You should have come to charm away the hours.
Belcolore. I do not recognize——
Frank. You must forget.
Besides, I wear a mask. What would you, dear?
Your heart is peopled yet, and I am lost.
Belcolore. You monk, you go your way, and I go mine.
Frank. With all those tears you have a prudish air.
My pretty friend, to speak without reserve,
Your future's lonesome with your lover gone.
Your captain had no money to bequeath;
He was a soldier, splendid in a fight,

But sorry scholar for the task of love—
All sentiment at night, all jeers by day.
Belcolore. Hush, saucy monk! Set store upon your soul.
Not always timely words are those you speak.
Frank. The dead are dead, and, madame, if you choose,
This purse is yours, and this, and this one too;
And look, a piece of paper wraps it round.
(*Covers the bier with gold and bills.*)
Belcolore. If I said yes, you might mistake and lose.
Frank (*aside*). Ah, Jupiter, he's tempting Danaë!
(*Aloud*) I warn you of my misanthropic turn;
I mean to lock you in some palace nook.
In bilious moods, I beat the servants round.
My bad digestion none dare disobey.
I have a jaundice, but they must be gay,
And when I'm wakeful, everybody's up.
I am capricious. Do I suit your taste?
Belcolore. No, by the holy cross, you don't!
Frank. Fond of rubles, no?
I have more left, though of the double sort.
(*Drops another purse on the bier.*)
Belcolore. You give me that?
Frank (*aside*). Behold the loadstone, gold!
The flesh is weak. Temptation is too strong.
(*Aloud*) An ulcer which I have beside my mouth

Disfigures me. I'm dreadful thin; I squint.
But little blemishes will vex you not.
Belcolore. You make me shiver!
Frank. There lies—may God forgive!—
A golden bracelet I bestow on you;
It will go well upon that dainty arm.
(*Throws bracelet on the bier.*)
This ulcer is a horror—gnaws my cheek;
Has mined my teeth. My face was plain, I know,
But now I am a really hideous man.
My eyebrows gone, my beard and hair are lost.
Belcolore. Horrors!
Frank. Here I keep beneath my robe
A ruby necklace, rather rare, I think.
(*Throws it on the bier.*)
Belcolore. Made in Paris?
Frank (*aside*). See you the minnows come,
Rise to the top, and swiftly take the bait?
(*Aloud*) If that were all. But here's that awful sore,
That makes me like a dead man, hurdle-drawn;
It pumps away my blood. My bones decay,
Down from my skull and neck to my foot-soles.
Belcolore. Enough, in Heaven's name! oh, spare me—spare!
Frank. Before you go, give back the gift, I pray.
Belcolore. You lie so wantonly.
Frank. One kiss, will you?

Belcolore. Ha, ha! I will!
Frank (*aside*). So pale for Danaë.
(*Seizes her hand.*)
(*Aloud.*) My child, look out and see the silent street.
They dug a vault below the catafalque.
The door we'll find ajar. Why not descend?
(*Aside*). Why not my tomb?
(*Aloud.*) In fact, we are alone; this coffin strong
Shall be a seat for us. The breeze is cool.
What say you, dearest?
(*Lifts the pall.*)
Belcolore. Monk, there's nothing here!
Frank (*unmasking*). The bier is empty? Frank, then, is alive.
Now, harlot, get you gone! Your hour is come!
Begone, and speak no word, and come no more.
(*Dagger in hand, drives her away.*)
Frank (*alone*). Stiletto mine, thy blade is glistening bare,
And beautiful as is a virgin. Heart
And arm, why tremble ye? And why should one
Approach the other, seeking to be one?
It was my thought, and was it also thine,
O providence of God, that all should end?
Thou, dreary tomb, dost open wide thy jaws.
Thou, raving specter, laugh! I fear thee not.
Love I deny, and fortune, glory too,
In nothingness believe, as in myself.

The sun doth know that 'neath his light
In matter only lieth immortality.
The dust is God's. All else belongs to chance.
Are Caesar's ashes not the north wind's sport?
A blade of grass, a grain of corn our life?
That I, the child of chance, should have thus lived?
A little world, and all a kneaded shape,
A lamp in which the flame burnt out its wick;
And shall naught linger after on the sands
Whereon my shadowed body walketh now—
Naught, naught, not even a child, a passing thing,
Naught having voice to cry eternally?
To all who come to suck life's common breast,
That I your elder brother used to cling
And suck at nature-mother's long-lived breast,
Her marble breast, so dry for you and me.
And yet, God bless me, had I bit the teat?
If I had bitten the nurse's bosom then,
If I had bruised it in so fierce a way
That she should ever bear that scar,
And show the nursling's teeth upon her heart,
What matter if the deed be treasured up?
Human ingratitude is the tomb of good.
Evil more strong: Erostratus is right.
Empedocles obscured heroic fame,
The day he plunged himself in Etna's flames:
With sole of sandal, he dealt savage blow
To glory, that she staggered and fell in,

And what remained? His strength was doubly proved,
So century after century succeeds;
In the deep bark of ages is his name.
The tree may wither, but the name remains.
The sacred parchments shall indeed decay;
The marbles, like to drunken men, shall fall,
A people's tongue shall drop from living speech,
But this man's name, forever mummified,
Shall, wrapped in spices, through the ages keep;
Above his grave the grass shall never grow.
I will not die. Behold me, Nature, now,
Two nervous arms I brandish in the air.
My soul is doubly wrapped in armor strong
To shield me from your flashing sword of steel.
I hunger—will not leave the tavern now;
Begin thy task of satisfying me.
If not, my appetite I shall appease.
Beware, I go! What matters which the road?
I walk, I'll go where'er the human soul
For spectacle but suffers or enjoys.
Hate is the passion which can outlive hope!
Of yore you haunted me, you black-robed fiend;
We were acquainted in the house of thatch;
But I did not believe thy fantom pale,
Of all that flitted in surrounding air,
Would be the last to leave me. Be it so!
Well, kiss me, then, my sad and faithful friend;
You see, I've held aside the veil of life.
We go together; no, you follow me,

Like a sweet sister, in the farthest climes;
You'll be my refuge and experience.
If Doubt, that tardy and that tasteless fruit,
Last to be plucked from tree of knowledge fair,
What shall I do, but bear it in my heart?
Doubt! Everywhere it is; the current bears it on;
'Tis that pale shroud which incredulity,
In pity, throws on margin of the grave,
To cover branded corse of human hope!
O future centuries, how sad your fate!
Glory, a specter, has returned to heaven;
Love is no more, and life is desolate,
And solitary man thinks but of death.
As murderers pillaging a village house,
Are seen by gleam of burning home, or torch,
In silence terrible, they crouch, or kneel,
Strangling a virgin, with their gory hands
Rending her fair, long hair, the victim frail
Dies like a wounded rabbit in the field:
So the deft doctors strangle nature kind.
Now what remains for you, posterity,
The day in which you make the funeral train
Of moribund and old humanity?
We hear your curses, sons of men unborn.
Our wives to old men will give monstrous birth,
Who fiercely smite the earth and lie on it,
Crying to God that it was fertile once.
"Why didst thou make her barren?" is their quest.

But you, you sniveling sophists, paramours
Of Doubt, when you have dried the desert wells,
When you have proven that this universe
Is but a corpse made for anatomists;
When of creation you will thus have made
An ordered cemetery of smooth graves,
Where with your icy hand you will have cut
The same inscription on the tombstones sad,
I see you cringing in the shaded ways
That penetrate the silence. Tender plants
Will no more love, nor nourish, nor conceive;
The forest leaves, deciduous, will fall;
And you, grave-diggers in the common tomb,
Will sit in council, proving man a fool.
And when you know him as the worms will do,
You'll order him, that shadow of a day,
To sport upon his grave—he falls therein,
A mass inert, and may God be avenged.
You wished to play Prometheus; the god
With bleeding hands, and scalpel shining clean,
Remodel and revamp the world of God!
But, worthier than you, that tempter bold,
When having made a man without a soul,
He raised his hand and called for fire from
heaven,
Your man was made! The very flame was yours,
And yet you have blown out the breath of God.
Contempt is science, and consort of doubt;
Eternal wisdom is eternal sleep;
When all is conquered, we shall have reduced

To fixity the wild, pulsating soul.
What hideous ocean is our common life,
To glide in sunshine o'er its brimming waves,
Like son of God who walked the trackless sea?
What fearful monsters, reptiles of the main,
Plow savagely the deep abyss beneath?
Pallor of death is on the forehead white
Of divers laboring for nothingness;
For love is nothingness, and glory, death.
Ah, miry prodigal who feeds the swine,
How many beds will rest thee ere thy home
Will once more gladden thy distracted eyes?
Worn out with lamentations, ever true,
The cry of madmen whom false hope deceived,
Like to that Gyges, who in darkest night
Fled from the fantom of the bather pale,
And who one instant drove his burning look
Into the soul of youth, a fearful wound.
Folly wounds deep, and bleeding secretly,
We know not what we see of things of life.
All lead their victim to some certain goal,
Lights ever fleeing and yet still pursued,
And as one runs, strength will forsake him there.
The distance does not vanish, but leads on.
He finds that what surrounds him only mocks
His hope of treasure, so will not return.
He understands he is a creature dazed,
And that he'll fall unless he look to heaven.
He walks the road his genius will pursue;
He walks, and as the ground overhangs th' abyss,

He sees there's not one moment in his life
That human genius doth not folly meet.
They wrestle, hand to hand, on slippery rock;
While both climbed it only one comes down.
O world, O Saturn, O immortal stars,
O universe, thus is it everywhere!
O night, deep night, specter unfolding worlds,
Creation, when thou raisest thy dim veil
To see thyself in thy immensity,
Seest thou from north to south but nakedness?
Tell me if that be so, O mother mine.
Why fill me with that ever-burning thirst,
If there's no spring wherein it may be quenched?
Thou shouldst have given it being, mother mine;
The shrub has dew, the eagle has its prey.
What have I done to thee to be forgot?
Why are not trees athirst with passion too?
Why forge the arrow, Nature, if indeed
You know yourself that ere it can be shot
'Twill be directed to a mark unknown,
And that the dart which left your clanging string
Will strike no bird, will bring no quarry down?
It simply pleases, to make sport of me!
The morning wind is sweet, the breath of spring!
Such is the cry of age, while I am young.
Angel of hope, if you are but to die,
When on my heart you come to rest yourself,
Sound your farewell and give me last embrace.
While I am young, and life is dear to me,

Make intercession and inquire if Heaven
Has drop of water for a faded flower.
Fair angel, as we drink it, we shall die.
(*He falls on his knees; a bouquet of wild roses falls from his breast.*)
Who casts beside me these wild roses sweet?
Hast thou so long lived happy on my breast?
Poor plant! 'twas thus it was that Déidamia
Did on the white road cast thee at my feet!

ACT THE FIFTH

Scene I

(*A Village Square. Déidamia, the Maidens, and the Women.*)

Déidamia. Dress me with garlands, O my darlings fair!
Sing me sweet songs, for reveries are dumb.
Lay your soft veil upon my golden hair.
At sunset my beloved will surely come.
The Maidens. Adieu! we lose thee, daughter of the hills;
Beloved of happiness, its sweetest dower.
Sprinkle thy roses with the grief that fills
Our hearts to lose thee, Tyrolean flower!
The Women. Virgin, we'll escort thee to thy warrior chief;

Will change thy garments ere we gladly sing
Of Hymen's secrets. Ah, the time is brief,
Till bound, all trembling, with the nuptial ring.
The Maidens. The hills no longer echo thy sweet song,
Nor wilt thou wash the fleece in fountains clear.
The crying folds thy memory will prolong,
With thee as guide, the lambs had naught to fear.
The Women. How fair thy face! What fascinations there,
Lit with the beauty of thy happiness!
How Frank will love thee! Like Diana fair,
Thy huntsman folds thee in a fond caress.
Déidamia. And yet I suffer. If you think me fair,
Tell him, my sisters; he will love me more.
Would God that I were beautiful! my prayer
More like the young immortal we adore.
Alas! my beauty's but a pallid face;
That of Diana is a lovely rose;
For sorrow robbed me of my youthful grace.
I wept when Charles left me. Ah, who knows
My anguish as I sat at mother's side,
Forlorn, dejected? True, I nearly died.

Scene II

(*The Mountaineers.*)

So Frank's alive—his death a false report
Of hunters listening to a camp-fire's tale;
And they who sold the bear had killed him not;
And how he frightened them when he awoke!
Now forced to silence when he speaks to-day,
He slays all legends with his living voice.
What time the Farnese Hercules was thrown
Into the Tiber, a new Hercules
Was made; the people called it handsomer.
The model being dead, the credulous
Know only what they see. But Hercules
Emerged one day, colossal from the wave,
And being raised beside his shadow small,
That foolish marble from its pedestal
Fell prone upon the earth, a vanquished thing.
Frank lives once more, bereft of somber look,
Pale forehead, hard of heart, whose idleness
Let poverty hang dangling on his heels;
But now a bright companion, warrior brave,
Who slaps the honest farmers on the back.
Thank God, his wrongs forgotten and forgiven,
And here are we, prepared to drink his health.
To-day he weds fair Déidamia,
Skilled as housewife though but sweet sixteen.
If ever loved, by such as her indeed.

A soldier told the story of the bier.
It seems at first Frank had entered it.
Two of his servants, both sole confidants,
Had closed the top, and on approach of night
The priest with torches came across the street.
After the bearers laid the coffin down,
" You'll leave me," said he, " but a breathing-
hole,
Since some day I must see death face to face;
We'll get acquainted, and shall be old friends."
He had himself borne gravely to the church,
And through the hole he gazed upon the sky,
And at the holy place, whence dogs are driven,
Whistling, encased, the service of the dead.
Resting uncomfortably, he desired a mask
In order to be present at his funeral.
Ay, what man has not had his disguise?
The pilgrim's cowl, the helmet of the knight,
Are dungeons where we see, yet are not seen.
Not even virtue is ofttimes disguise;
That real buffoon's mask, hypocrisy,
Parades with empty pride the stage of life,
Yet trembling lest discovery appears,
Which later on will tear the mask away.
(*Exeunt.*)

Scene III

(*A small room. Frank, Déidamia.*)

Frank. Ah, have you waited for me, sweet Mamette!
You counted the long days in heart and head,
Yet still stood faithful at your open door.
Déidamia. My friend, my friend, Mamette has suffered much!
Frank. The hours slowly fled, and day and night
Found you still wandering on that lonely road;
Your Charles far away, you vigil kept.
Like Fortune, all these months you waited me!
Déidamia. How pale you're getting, and your voice, how changed!
O God! what have you done so far, so long?
My mother, do you know, was in despair.
Had you one thought of us, when time allowed?
Frank. I've known in life a miserable wretch
Called Frank, a being most unsociable,
Who held aversion in his neighbors' hearts;
Famine and fear, like to oppressive wolves,
Lived in his hollow eyes; grim poverty
Had gnawed his flesh down to the shining bone;
Disdain disjected him, and, suffering shame,
Which follows poverty, was bound upon his back;

Life and its laws filled him with burning hate.
Thus, ever shambling, with that halting step
That shepherds have in following idle flock,
He wandered on the mountains and the plain,
And poaching everywhere, yet still flung forth,
And still he moaned about fatality;
With neck bent forward as beneath an ax;
One would have thought him but a prowling thief,
Or, even worse, a shameful beggar he;
Not yet a criminal, fearing punishment,
For his sole virtue was a fear of crime.
This first and last of wretches I have known;
Yes, dear Mamette, that creature I have known.
Déidamia. Who can be there, behind that window hid,
With two great eyes, and wondering wild look?
Frank. But where? I see no one.
Déidamia. Yes, yes! Some one o'erhears us,
Who moved away the moment you turned round.
Frank. It is some beggar that has passed this way.
Come, my Déidamia, what has made you pale?
Déidamia. Well, and your story, where is it to end?
Frank. Another time: it was an orgy foul;
I saw a picture in a mirror clear,
A gambler in his cups lay on a couch;
A woman, or at least a woman's form,
Embraced him, as I hold you, darling, now.

Vainly he struggled with the spectral form;
She seemed a siren choking him to death!
That man unhappy—do you hear me now?
Come, come and kiss me!
Déidamia. Oh, no, I will implore you not.
(*He kisses her by force.*)
Frank, my dear Charles, wait until we've wed.
Oh, wait until to-night! My mother comes!
I will not, sir—be good—you'll make me die!
Frank. Light of the sun, how rare a girl is she!
Déidamia. We must, my friend, arrange a family;
We'll have our neighbors and your relatives,
My mother, above all, and children dear.
You'll work all summer on our pleasant farm,
And I shall keep the dairy and the rest.
Long as we live we ne'er shall separate,
Living together till old age arrive.
You laugh? And why?
Frank. I laugh at thunder.
Yes, devil take me! It may fall on me.
Déidamia. And what is that, sir? And why speak you so?
Frank. Go on, my little one, 'tis not at you.
Déidamia. But who is there? I tell you we are watched!
You do not see that ever-moving face
There, in the shadow of the wall?
Frank. Where? On what side moveth this specter head?

You're wrought to terror by some fancy, dear.
(*He takes her in his arms.*)
It would be cruel to suppose that one,
Mamette, less beautiful and pure than you,
In foreign places, by some other man
Might be so loved. Ah, yes! I've felt my soul
Once more a virgin with sweet thought of you,
As water that reflects your lovely face
Is made more pure, because your image chaste
Beneath its crystal seems to be contained.
'Tis really you! I hold you fresh and sweet
Like to a bird, and still forgetting all.
There is your cot, your distaff, and your frame,
Patience and sadness with your work inwrought.
O you, who have received in your sweet heart
My sorrows and my tears; who in exchange
Have given me rest and happiness serene,
How gracious you behave, my little one,
Forgetting my disdain, when that my heart
Has been so wanting to your happiness!
Déidamia. Ah, you always know, dear hypocrite,
Some beautiful and oft-repeated speech.
I like them, when 'tis you that utters them;
But not for me were they invented first.
Frank. Tell me, will you come to Italy?
To Spain? To Paris? Oh, how gay we'd be!
The cost so little and your beauty great!
Déidamia. Now tell me, is this bonnet in the mode?

Wait till you see me with my new white gown,
My shoes and stockings, and my Sunday hat;
My beautiful green apron. Why your laugh?
Frank. One hour hence, and we shall wedded be.
The kiss you shun, and which I steal from you,
You'll give it to me, Mamette, willingly;
In one short hour, my God! you'll come with it.
Mamette, I am dying for the love of you!
Déidamia. Ah! I've learned for my part, how to wait.
I'll be your sister for a little while.
One hour more, and I shall be your wife.
Yes, I'll return it—yes, with all my soul;
Your rapturous kiss, my Frank, shall be returned
With added fervor, and I care not then
If your fierce thunder crush me!
Frank. Oh, how enduring in this hour! How fair!
Oh, with what cruel pleasure you submerge
And drown my heart, Déidamia!
Déidamia. Look, look, the head is ever lingering there!
Who can so watch us?
Frank. Darling Mamette,
Do not turn from me that charming lip—
No, even though eternity engulf
My soul!

Déidamia. My friend, a lover should respect his wife.

Frank. No, no! e'en though your kiss should burn my soul!
No, though your jealous God should punish us!

Déidamia. Well, yes, your mistress—yes, your darling one!
Your own Mamette, your servant and your wife.
Though death may come, I love you; I relent.
Now fold me in your arms, unroll my hair,
And crush my dress of linen with th' embrace.
I know I'm beautiful, for many loved,
But I was yours. I've kept my treasure, Frank!
(*She falls in his arms.*)

Frank (*rising quickly*). Some one is there, 'tis true.

Déidamia. What matters it, my Charles, if you are here?

Frank. Ah! massacre and hell! It's Belcolore!
Stay here, Mamette, until I speak with her.
(*He jumps out of the window.*)

Déidamia. O God! what will he do? what can it be?
He's now returning. Well, what have you found?

Frank (*at the window outside*). No, but, by thunder, it will have to come!
I think it was a ghost, and you were right.
Await me till I walk around the house.

Déidamia (*running to the window*). My Charles, do not go! If toward the plain
It speeds, then let it go; it bears ill luck.
(*Belcolore appears at another window and immediately disappears.*)
Help! help! I'm struck a deadly blow. Some one
Has driven a knife into my heart!
(*Déidamia falls, and goes out crawling.*)
The Mountaineers (*running on from without*).
Frank, what has happened? Some one screamed aloud.
But who is lying there, soaked in her blood?
Just God; it is Mamette! Her soul has fled.
A dagger has been driven in her side.
Murder! Frank, murder!
Frank (*entering the cottage, carrying Déidamia dead in his arms*). Oh, thou, my well-beloved!
With my first kiss thy soul has closed itself.
For fifteen years thou hadst awaited it.
Mamette, too rudely art thou sent away
Without returning it to me!

July and August, 1832.

STANZAS

RUINS

Ah, how I love to see a vale
Of sand or shale,
Where rise, like mausoleum hale,
Black walls of monastery drear!
Ah, how I love to see at hand
The pile command
White cross and holy basin-stand,
And feudal castle's threshold near!

Among the ancient Pyrenees,
Swept by the breeze,
Old churches, gaunt amid the trees,
Memorials sad of crumbling stones
Time can not blast, nor tooth of rust,
Nor lightning's gust.
Of what great mountain changed to dust
Are you the bare and lifeless bones?

I love your towers with heads of gray,
Where pilgrims pray;
There sunbeams and the breezes play.
Your stairways steep I climb among,

Which wind amid the entrails dark
Of walls so stark,
The echoes of the columns—hark!
Repeat thy hymns, departed throng!

And when the storm begins to roar
The country o'er,
And sweeps where mountain forests soar,
Whose leaves are turned to red and gold,
I love to see the granite spires
Like flame of fires,
A-bending where the stone aspires,
Grim steeples of the abbey old.

I love to see the evening sun
Strike windows dun,
And, lo, a glory has begun!
Mine eyes with bloom are comforted.
The golden light is stretched in bands,
Green saints, whose presence awe commands,
With folded hands,
Pray for the living and the dead.

THE WILLOW

A Fragment

I

A silence expectant now hushes the throng,
And sweet Georgette Smolen proceeds with her song.
Pale as a lily, and sad is her glance,
Regretful, perhaps, of her late home in France.
She's only sixteen, of American birth,
But in that country, the fairest on earth,
Never have blue eyes more sweet gazed upon
Its sky, and reflected within them its tone.
Fragile and ailing, still proudly she bore
Herself like a queen, and she carelessly wore
Upon her pure brow, like a crown, her soft hair,
Those long golden tresses, so shining and rare.
Hers is a beauty of which they say true,
Her admirers are many, her lovers are few;
True-hearted and noble, a goddess she seemed,
Where pleasure for mother sweet modesty claimed.
Though soft is her voice, 'tis proclaimed in each line,
Her gesture, deportment, her carriage divine,
A haughty demeanor repelling the crowd;
Is it sadness, or may be disdain? She is proud

With a pride that is gentle, and strives not to wound,
For she in her short life has already found
Much hope and much fear, much indifference cold—
The child of the times—but who then could withhold
His heartfelt delight in that charming fair face,
The mere sight of which would banish all trace
Of sorrow, and evil's corrosions repair.
How effectively potent on all human care
Are those sweet twin symbols of comfort and peace,
The true heart of youth and the youthful of face.
'Tis strange how the icy, implacable one
Is melted, as though by the glance of the sun.
The unveiled mystery of that brilliant glance,
Which, piercing as keenly and sharp as a lance,
Goes straight to the heart, and the cold mortal deems
That day the most rueful he first felt its gleams.

Miss Smolen sang on; all eyes were upon her;
The gilded lorgnettes were uplifted to con her;
That half-haughty glance of superlative pride,
Which we all know so well, and in vain seek to hide,
So scornfully calm when a woman is fair,
Ignoring them all with her stateliest air.

She warbled that melody, plaintively drear,
Which 'wakening memories—death drawing near—
Wrings from young hearts that are passing away.
Songs Desdemona in trembling dismay
Sobbing at midnight in woful despair,
As sinks on her pillow a forehead of care.

First her clear notes, full of undefined ill,
Seemed to portray but a sweet, languid thrill,
When lips are asmile and the eyes only weep;
As when a traveler over the deep,
Adrift in his light skiff, a buoyant waif,
Heedless to know the coast treach'rous or safe;
Whether it ends in a tempest or not.
So the young maiden, entranced in her thought,
Enwrapped in an ecstasy of the sweet voice,
Fearless and effortless, bankrupt of choice,
Floating bewitched on a musical stream,
Her eyes on the skies, her soul in a dream.

How great is her charm, still compelling surprise!
They all are entranced by the look in her eyes.
Thus ever it is, be it night in the storm,
Or be it a nightingale weeping forlorn,
Or be it the golden bow, harp of the air,
Or be it celestial sigh, or human prayer.
Where is the man who has once bowed his head,
Listening the sound of a voice that's now dead,

Finds not a tear in his soul to be shed,
A tribute of love for the friend that is dead?

Daylight is waning, the night-wind blows drear.
Silence! The hush is pervaded by fear,
Growing and spreading till focused in fright,
Then goes the murderer forth to the night,
Forces unseen are at fight in the air,
Iago to work! Cassius dies on the square.
Is it the fisherman's song in the bay?
Soft on the wind, gently dying away.
Hark you, ye doomed, there is no sorrow worse
Than a happy remembrance in days of reverse.

When in the last notes the tremulous flame
Flits in an ecstasy over her frame,
Ready to melt now, frenzied, distressed,
Screaming she presses the harp to her breast;
The maiden then feeling the claims of her part,
Calling for melodies unknown to art,
Sobbing harmonious rhythms of sound,
Dying she falls with her harp to the ground.
Heavens! to die thus with heart full of life!
Then came a hush of harm, terror, and strife.
The woman, in falling, had found only tears.
Weep, Heaven bids thee, and calm all thy fears:
Leave a sweet tear on the fringe of thine eye,
To shine, as it drops, like a star in the sky.
Many whose ashes are watered with tears,
Living, have longed for such balm to their years.

Modestly watching the audience retreat,
That filed out, amazed at singing so sweet,
Gazing their rapture on her they admired,
Blushingly then Miss Smolen retired,
But on the balcony leaned for a space.
He who has felt it alone can express
That charm irresistible, soulful and good,
That deep-felt emotion not understood,
Which a heart feels when surprised by itself,
Which a heart knows when untainted with pelf.
Then the first petals of their own delight
Ope, like a flower in coolness of night.

Deep from thy mystic cell, peace we may
borrow,
Harmony! harmony! daughter of sorrow;
Nurtured in Italy, born from above,
Language that genius invented for love.
Gate of the heart, through which alone thought
Passes unveiled, unfearing, untaught,
Think of the mystery, when a mere child,
There to its solitude seems reconciled.
Sad as its heart may be, seems to rejoice,
Born in the air it breathes, sweet as its voice;
Its plaintive wailings, not understood,
Like those of the winds and waters and wood.
After vibration has ceased, and the soul,
Under the Spirit's hand, feeling the whole
Being to tremble, as when the harp-string,
Refusing all silence, will mournfully ring,

And when this fair one, absorbed in her theme,
Unconscious of love save as known in a dream,
Raises her eyes and behold in the gloom
Some one was near her, quite near her—but whom?
Who was it? How many bold eyes sought her own,
Quite unregarded their owners had known;
Many a proud one had fain bent the knee
To merit her smile; but this man, who was he?

Young, with an eye that was harsh and severe,
Who, when she swayed a whole audience with fear,
Sat near her motionless, seeming in doubt;
On her retiring, he'd followed her out.
There stood he now, a strange smile on his face,
Blond, with a curious, womanish grace;
Such as observed it would find in his look
Naught but a mystery, like a sealed book.

Englishman, surely, his clothing proclaimed,
Hailing from Oxford, whose learning is famed;
Owning the mansion in which his sire died
Poor, but entangled in family pride,
Living his life of ennui day by day,
Known as Tiburcé, a gallant, they say;
Nature's endowed him with many a charm:
His singing, indeed, would endear and disarm;
So sweet and so sad that no one as yet,
Who once heard that voice could ever forget;

But from the day that his father had died,
That song was frozen, the fountain was dried.

How did he know her? Say what mystery
Holds her eye riveted? What does she see
In this pale stranger? or what memory
Draws them together in such harmony?
If he, then, knows her, why this strange silence?
If she's unknown to him, why thus do vi'lence
To that frail nature, so timid and flushing?
No one is conscious of why she is blushing.
But when one timid eye, fearful, revealing,
Of the now trembling maid, tired of concealing,
Met his sharp arrow-glance, seeking her heart,
Only a flash, an invisible spark,
Sprang from one soul, and let God alone mark.
Then bending o'er her, thus gently spoke he:
" Lovest thou me, Georgette—lovest thou me? "

II

Low in the West the red sun declining,
Pure in his glow the bright day-star shining,
On the dark window the last gleam of day
Has just disconsolate faded away.
Lingering gleams of the beautiful light
Pierce from afar the dark veil of night;
Winds in their wand'rings sad echoes arouse,
And Tiburcé waits at the door of his house.
Two powerful en'mies their presence have shown
In the old house of the student so lone—

Time and ill-luck. Thou art silent, old hall!
Home of old warriors convivial.
In the long corridors dark as the tomb,
Where the sad echoes are lost in the gloom,
Here where retainers, those minist'ring bands,
Furnished the banquet with generous hands,
All, all are gone, and but one lonely light
High in the tower, in blackness of night,
Serves but to show lurid the sorry decay,
Those good old Feudal days long past away.
Here only solitude, poverty, reign,
And lived Tiburcé in his ruined domain.

An old laboratory's arches of stone,
Chose for his studio, dwelling alone,
Near the vicinity of a rude cave,
That once might have been grim prison or grave,
Mayhap an orat'ry's more sacred gloom;
For many an altar resembles a tomb.

Deep in the shade of that silent retreat
Old age had died and the children's light feet
Played, and the maiden with sad, mournful eyes,
Wept as she watched the broad standards arise.
Here, later still, in the calm of the stars,
The alchemist, bending at work with his jars,
Failing once more in pursuit of his quest
After that mystical ore without rest,
Had smitten his forehead with powerless hand,
Grown timid and old in his scrutiny, and

Idle philosophers weighing a thought,
Probing the why and the wherefore, are brought
Smiling to own that the efforts they trace,
Shown in remains of the old Roman ways,
Are but a portion of life's vanities.

At his bed's foot the old painting was hung
Where Raphael has pictured the family, wrung
By grief, are removing the Christ from the cross,
Mary demented, bewailing her loss,
Trying to cover her face with her hand,
Rigid her figure, and near her there stand
Daughters to comfort her, lifting up prayers,
How bitter, how tender a portion is theirs!
Ah, wound of the heart which is subtle to trace,
So quick to open, so slow to efface.

One more, a painting from Géricault's brush,
Vividly showing that moment of hush
When Judith the treach'rous holds in hand soft,
The head of the murdered Allori aloft.
And farther the light of a flickering lamp
Prints on the wall with a fugitive stamp
A shadow of marble, though broken, sublime,
Showing a hero, the sire of his time.

Thy mem'ry, hero! we trouble in vain;
Thy bust hides itself, and so veiled must remain,
Like thine image so darkened on Waterloo's
plain.

The arts are our friendly gods; those sons of peace
Reign 'neath your arches and never decrease;
Then silent study with comforting kiss
Soothes your grim sorrow and reassures bliss.
And thou above all, sad and true friend,
To whom the woful, in nights without end,
Whisper the secrets which tear at their hearts,
Goddess of song, to whom, when sorrow smarts,
They hail as " Consoler " and hold out their arms,
A consoler they need at the age when alarms,
When feverish desires, and heats of the blood
Are calling for changes with every throb;
When from the door of life, young life observing
Death on the horizon haunts him unswerving,
'Mid all those passions which come in their turn,
To nest in the heart made to bless or to burn,
Interest or hatred, ambition or love,
Tiburcé knows but one, the worst, it may prove;
At least till the furrows have shown
The germs of the others, but this one has grown.
As to that secret and terrible blight,
The bane of a world approaching its night,
Contempt of creation, of life, and of man,
Whoe'er imagined *him* under its ban?
Why has he sought thus to live all alone?
We cannot explain it—no reason is known.
E'en as a child he made study his love;
Ignored by the rest, he unflinchingly strove,

Following the footsteps of those to whom death
Shows up the secrets of being and breath.
Poring beneath his lamp with loving zeal,
Seeking from science what it would reveal,
Barren and profitless, all uninviting,
Sitting all night at work, studiously writing,
Sometimes in darkness, and when the white moon,
Hiding her rays in the midnight star-strewn,
Dauntlessly heedless of such barren task,
Conning the laws of the worlds, and he'd ask
News of that starry sea, which neither fate,
Nor eye, nor thought could ever calculate.

But ah! now numberless evenings have passed
Since when away all his work he had cast,
Cloistered in walls where his father had died,
Alone he has lived, and the world he defied
For two long years 'neath its saddened gray roof,
Meeting no eyes; and at peace? See the proof.
For the few friends who think of him, give him his rights,
Counting the days, have forgotten the nights.
Sought he for silence in hiding away?
Peace? Was it rest? Well, be that as it may,
What was his reason? Why, no one knows quite
What makes him stand on his threshold to-night.

Night, like a conqueror swiftly comes on,
With rustling banners, by winds lightly blown,

Vast shadow-armies encroach on the fields,
Forcing the Sun's retreat. Slowly he yields;
He rests on the mountain-top his failing band,
Sees night's dominion o'er all the dark land,
Throws a last look the forest askance,
Redd'ning the landscape with his dying glance.
So dies the day, and twilight lingers not.
Bleak, wintry night triumphs now where it fought.

Now scattered groups of the idlers and churls,
Roaming in idleness, flouting the girls,
Are still discernible through the dusk light.
Under the blackened thatch, gleams warm and bright,
Warm up the dwellings, old, ruined and gray,
With drip from the boughs and the winter's decay;
Near in the church sweet voices are ringing;
Rising like incense to God is the singing.
The wind's wilder music is rattling the panes,
And the sad sea accords with its booming refrains.
Faint discords arising which plainly bespeak
That license which comes at the end of the week;
Careless carousers have thrown thought away,
Forgetful of that which they were yesterday,
Bathing with sweat their bread, making their moan,
Scarcely to feel that their soul is their own;

Sure of to-day, and no care for to-morrow,
Oblivion's the easiest cure for all sorrow.
To one and all this panacea's given;
Like to the dew, it falls straight down from heaven.
To recollect or forget is upon earth
Costly elixir of marvelous worth.
Tiburcé, contemplating this passing phase,
Scarcely perceiving the figures in haze,
Motley reflections of this life of his
Under these roofs, how the sad destinies,
Follow their course and in silence endure,
Tiburcé so deemed that he also was poor.

Ah, Poverty cruel, what advantage art thou
To him who from lean breasts drinks milk's barren flow?
To what shall we liken a commonplace man,
Who, following at even the way he began,
Walking with measured step his lonely way,
Night only brings him sleep for the next day?
Perhaps it is wise; a less heavy wave
Bends down more slowly his head to the grave.
But he whom Genius has richly endowed,
When the thick shadows of midnight enshroud,
By the pale demon Insomnia pressed,
Suffers in silence and findeth no rest.
Lives of a twofold life, what is he here?
When at the gate of sleep there doth appear,

Like angel of Paradise set there to guard,
Invincible thought, with its bright, flaming
sword,
Excluding sweet sleep as an unwelcome guest,
Reigns o'er his pillow and changes his rest
Into a solitude vast and more drear
Than the grim deserts on the world's frontier?
But hark! in the silence the belfry's lone knell;
Tiburcé has arisen. "For prayer—it is well.
So be it; 'tis right—for me they will pray."
And so he departs on his devious way.

Day is no time for an evil devising;
The bold are imprudent, all caution despising;
Thought, in avoiding the world's open eyes,
Takes flight to the deeps of the heart where it
lies.
Night, holy night, who doth ever renew
The sun-beaten flowers with tenderest dew!

Star of the evening, thou bright messenger,
From thy blue palace that shinest afar,
With face all aglow from the clouds of the sun,
Wherefore this watchfulness over the plain?

The tempest has lulled, and the winds softly
breathe;
The forest, a-tremble, weeps over the heath;
The butterfly glided, in his airy flights,
Crosses the sweet-scented mead and alights.

What seekest thou on the bare, sleeping earth?
So fleet to the mountains I see thee fly forth;
Thou fleest smiling, my lachrymose friend,
And thy tremulous glancing has come to an end.
Star on the hills with thy silvery light,
Dropping bright tears from the mantle of night;
Thou from afar seest the shepherd retreat,
While, step by step, his flock follow his feet.
Star, whither goest thou out from the host?
Seek'st thou a bed of reeds on some lone coast?
Whither away, O star, wand'ring forever,
To fall like a pearl in the lap of the river?
If thou must die, star, and if thy most rare
Form in the vast sea must plunge its blond hair,
Before thou dost leave us, for one moment stay;
Star of sweet love, do not yet go away!

III

Answ'ring her friend, Georgette said, " It is true,
I love to roam by the ocean's deep blue,
And see the waves die on the still sleeping sands."
" But why do you weep? " cried Bell, taking her hands.
" Do not bid me to cease, Bell, for these are sweet tears—
Sweet, and yet causeless; and yet—Still your fears;
Often fear has its charms. It is pleasant to stay;
Let us remain for a moment, I pray."

" Alas! dear Georgette, I must do as you say,
But the night is fast deep'ning. God aid us, I pray!
But tell me, dear, what does this trembling portend? "
Georgette softly sighed as she looked at her friend:
" Before each, 'tis said, in our journey through life,
A double path stretches and causes us strife;
But one, and one only, exists, Bell, for thee;
Tell me, next winter how old you will be?
Why, of course I should know it: our age is the same.
How silly am I to forget! but I claim
That I love thee, poor Bell, from the depth of my heart."
" Georgina, what ails you? We really must start.
Here, let me support you, and lend me your hand.
Your limbs are a-tremble—you scarcely can stand."
They took a few steps, Georgette trembling and slow.
" Stop! stop! " she cried out, " no farther I'll go.
I cannot flee from it! Oh, can you not see?
I'm pale, and I suffer? It seems now to me
That the noise of the wind and sound of the wave
Will soon lay my broken heart low in the grave.

Ah, Bella! my Bella! it's only through thought,
So much have I suffered, so much have I fought!
What a terrible night! it seemed never to end—
So sweet, yet so awful; but hearken, my friend."
" Speak, dear Georgina, and tell me thy woe."
" Yes, all of it, Bella, thou oughtest to know.
Oh, lend me thy hopefulness, dear, to defend
And comfort my soul—my sister, attend.
It is from happiness, Bella, I die.
My life like a stream to the ocean sweeps by;
To thee all these waters, these woods, are mute;
Come, let me speak of their secret repute."

. . . . . .

IV

Here on a meadow the dew-moistened heath
Bends by the wind of the evening's soft breath;
The castle of Smolen, that ven'rable hall,
Lifts its sad portals and frowns over all.
There, at the foot of those walls, Tiburcé stays;
Dismounting, he listens, and meanwhile his gaze
Scans the damp windows, where now and again
Shadows within cast their forms on the pane.
" Feasting again," said Tiburcé with a sneer;
" Has she deceived me somehow, I fear? "
As a low sound on the hill caught his ear.
He was unarmed and alone, and surmised
Some one a plot to betray had devised.

With hesitant step he approaches the gates;
Under the portal's deep shadow he waits;
Just then a window attracting his eye,
Calls him to make reconnaissance thereby.
What a surprise is revealed to his gaze,
Near the warm hearth with its bright, crackling blaze—
Smolen the elder, with fatherly care,
Leading the others in family prayer!
O'er the old warrior, once so terrific,
Holiness hovers on wings beatific.
He prays, and two women, in lowly devotion,
Lift up their souls in a fervent emotion.
Tiburcé knows their faces, one old, but the other—
Defiler, defiler, why comest thou hither?
Though she is kneeling, the chants of the saints
No more entrance her—she trembles, and faints!
Why does she tremble, eyes fixed on the ground?
Is not thy father the friend to be found
Truer, and trusting thy truth as his own,
Even now blessing thy name at the throne,
As the child of his comfort? Alas! for thy love,
Thine angel takes flight at his step like a dove.
Her sire entertains of suspicion no breath;
His sixty long years have augmented his faith.
Pale is the maiden arising from prayer.
Bow down, Georgina, most sacred the place,
Receiving his blessing and loving embrace.

Press to your burning lips, while you remain,
The hand of the old man again and again;
Hearken, thy heart beating sweet, lady fair,
Pulsing with throbs of love, " Tiburcé is there."

Yes, he is there, Georgette, watching for thee;
Thy father's fond blessing he also can see.
There at the door, like a thief in the night,
Watching, and scheming a method of flight,
Haste! time is flying, the daylight is dying,
The bright stars arise, and a low wind is sighing.

The castle is wrapped in the stillness of night,
Though here and there shining is seen a dim
light;
Soft steps are heard moving, the crack of a door;
Tiburcé stands listening, silence once more.

Who has not felt the sensation of fear
In the deep night, when no mortal is near,
And turned back in fright, for there, at his side,
Behind him, before him, a form seems to glide?
In darkness of night he descries lines of fire
Crossing each other like strands of gold wire,
And, fearful, imagines he hears sounds of strife,
Which warn of the robber, e'en seeking his life,
With phantoms and fears in the shadow so deep,
For night is the time man is destined for sleep.
There, in the dark, terror flies overhead,
Like wind in the trees, in that moment of dread,

In solitude deep he is frightened and pale;
With fear his poor heart seems ready to fail.

In a window's dark angle, embrasured and wide,
Tiburcé alone in the shadow doth stride;
Impatient he waits in the gloom of the night,
Till a white form appears in the moon's silver light,
And she glides to his arms in a tender embrace.
" Alas! two long years! " and her voice seemed to die
On her pale, icy lips in a murmuring sigh.

V

" How now, my lord? why so gloomy a brow?
Hide not from me what perplexes you now.
You knelt not this morn at the source of relief.
I'm surely afflicted to find you in grief."
" Tis nothing—a trifle," said he with a frown;
" But where is your daughter? She cometh not down."
" My dear lord, she loves you—is pleased when you're glad,
And shares in your sorrow whene'er you are sad."
She weeps with emotion: " Smolen, with dread
I ask you, what called you last night from your bed?

You bade me be silent, but, Smolen, I know,
That roads and the roofs were covered with snow.
Something mysterious did draw you away;
For the sake of our friendship, tell me, I pray."
"Leave me at present; don't you see I am ill?"
"Ill, Smolen—ill? And you yet, without reason,
Rose in the night, in this inclement season,
Exposing yourself to the tempest's rude blast,
And I, who'd have hindered, you silenced, and passed
Much like an assassin with evil design.
Yes, you are ill, and there's no skill of mine
Can avail for your cure; your heart is the source
Of the pain you endure. What ailment is worse?
Great God of Pity! He calls for his sword!
Where, where are you going? Don't leave us, my lord!"
"There, there, it is over," the old man replied;
"But where is my daughter?" he bitterly cried.

VI

Here with a majesty on the deep walls
Gnawing eternal the sea-billow falls.
From the womb of the ocean uprises the sun,
Young and victorious, his purpose to run;
Soul of the Worlds all above and below,
Great ocean inconstant, of ebb and of flow,
Weary of following the moon overhead
Thy goddess divine of the soft, silent tread—

Under the sunlight now rests and retreats
In thy vast billows the doomed sky repeats,
The earth smiles upon thee, and all, ev'rywhere,
Bask in thy light at this moment of prayer;
Great, Sublime Spirit of light and of birth,
Resting thy face on the center of earth,
Fettered by Heaven, a pris'ner remains.
Thou, whose great arm o'er the heavenly plains
Guides the great sun 'mid the scintillant spheres,
O'er the invisible pathway he steers,
And makes with a glance or a fleeting desire
The comet's hyperbola merge in the fire.
Thou canst invoke, or the tempest allay,
Over the face of this our globe of clay;
Man to his Maker upraising his face,
Dreams immortality for a poor space;
He passes, and fades, but not to the dark,
For, like unto thee, he enfoldeth a spark
Of that central life and eternal reward,
Toward which the world with a yearning regard
Holds out her arms to the God of her fate,
Ready to die should he not animate.

When God first created the world with a word,
He formed it to perish; on thee he conferred
Immortality's rights, but a lone solitude,
And all with his love he has richly endued.
The torrent divine of the infinite springs,
Thou God of the youthful, who evermore brings

All of the wealth and the joy that we crave,
At times smiling gladly, at times seeming grave.
What availeth the sea, its calms and its dreads,
Or worlds without name rolling over our heads,
This time and this life, to the heart that's on fire,
Thou father of dreams, loved son of desire?
Thy daughters will crown thee with flowers at their best;
Thy mother will lull thee to sleep on her breast.

At the bright hour of hope when daylight is born,
The bird of the furrows announces the morn;
The walls of the city loom up stern and gray;
To his lone home Tiburcé is wending his way.
Hushed is the heath, the meadows, the mart,
And all, e'en to memory, is hushed in his heart.
For nature and man are occasional times
When life seems to slumber and happiness chimes.
There's a pause, a great calm, an ecstasy sweet.
That traveler Time with invisible feet
Who on to eternity maketh his way,
Now sits by the wayside in pensive delay.

Oh, burning the flame—like the hot desert sand—
Which hand of the loved one has left to the hand;
The lip to the lip, and soul to the soul,
In sight of thy pleasure, O night! we extol.

'Tis dawn that should vanish and fold up her
wing;
Why wake thee, when far from the light of day-
spring?
When thy sweet eyes were closing in passion's
portal,
With accents serene of thy sisters immortal:
What dost thou here, lady fair, at this hour,
Watching the waves as they break on the shore?
Think'st thou to follow the steps of thy lover?
The tide will arise and the waters pass over;
The foam of its waves will deceive thy fair eyes;
Afar thou'lt conceive it to be paradise!
Where of thy loved one is centered the power?
Go in, heart of love! the east wind this hour
With keen chilling breath carries ice in its blast.
Return to the manor and think of the past.

Under the light mists which cover the earth,
Tiburcé returns to the home of his birth.
Its presence gave promise of shelter at least;
Its front a warm glow from the light of the east.
Just at the moment when closing his door,
He felt it resisting, and, almost before
He could stop to consider, was gripped like a
vise,
With a strong hand of iron that chilled him like
ice.
" Who are you? " said he, as he strove to get free.
" Sir," said old Smolen, " just listen to me."

VII

How strangely unusual, at this time of day,
To see in the cloister the sisters betray
Such signs of excitement, and pass one by one.
The turmoil increases, much talking is done,
Then all at once ceases, and all for a space,
Silently questioning look in each face,
As though in the fear of some untoward event.
" Hush! it's a moan! " said a sister intent;
" I heard it; it seems, one would say, like a voice
Of some one in suff'ring. Again, hear that noise! "
It came from a cave around which stood a band
Kneeling, in tears, crucifixes in hand.
" O sisters, pale sisters! o'er whom do you pray?
Which of your comrades is dying to-day?
Which of you sisters will still seek a lost
Reminder of days forgotten by most?
Ye daughters of God, ye who count them so few,
Whether fate spares them, or asks them of you.
You await death in your garments of woe,
Dressed like the bride for the grave where you go.
Who knows which is greater for you in your gloom:
From life to the cloister, or cloister to tomb?

Reclined on the edge of a couch lying there,
A woman, mere child, very frail, but still fair,

Seemed in her striving to struggle with death,
Waving her arms as though panting for breath;
With impotent efforts at kissing the cross,
She weeps, and she screams, and she calls out her loss—
For her mother—O sisters, what can she mean?
For it is not thus that one dies at sixteen."

Twice has the sun risen fair o'er the water
Since to this cloister an old man had brought her.
She was left kneeling when he went away,
And when she arose again, pallor so gray
Compelled her to reach forth an arm for a stay,
And e'er since that moment did nothing but pray.

Say your prayers over her—pray for the dying,
So young and weak, and her trembling hand lying,
Points, as she dies, to the seat of the smart,
And whate'er her illness, it came from the heart.
Know you the care that a young maiden needs?
Easy to shatter that frailest of reeds.
Under a light touch it bows and it bends;
Homelike security, love of her friends,
These are her strong supports; let but one fail her,
Adieu! only pray. If at last death assail her,
When light of Heaven opened upon her,
She would say before dying, as did Desdemona,
"Too much love killed her." Then there are others,

Sweetest of creatures now under the sun,
On whom Heaven's bounties are poured one by one;
Tender and good, and too charming for toil,
Whom man, though he harmeth, he never can soil.
Misfortune, that dry-handed, churlish old man,
Seeing them droop their heads ere he began
To tarnish their beauty or compass their doom
A throne must be theirs, or they sink to the tomb.

'Tis sad to consider, there have been others
Whom death has snatched from the arms of their mothers,
Whom Heaven had destined to happiness only;
Such is she also, who, dying there lonely,
Raising her heavy head with weak endeavor,
Strives to support it on arm all a-quiver;
She listens, she watches without intermission
Through the stained glass in the massive partition.
A glorious morning doth vanquish the night;
Earth is reviving with heat, life, and light.
When a beautiful sky dawns bright upon earth,
And the aspect of boons all cherished from birth,
Show to our fading sight in their true light,
Then we perceive what a desert of blight
Our life has been always, but then, there is hope.
Chief of celestial guards, ready to cope

With death, and to watch over pain to the end,
Who throws on the dying flame perfumes to blend,
And even when death has removed to the deep,
She lulls with her singing, Pain falling asleep.

Far over the sea as her glance can attain,
The eyes of the child on the waters remain.
" What! nothing? " she murmurs, and can she abide,
With death's slow advances on that other side?
The ocean rolls round, and the world seems to turn
With sudden upheaval—confusion! concern!
" Angels of Heaven! " they exclaim in surprise,
" Is it forever she's closing her eyes? "

The door at that instant resounded—then hush!
A footstep—a young man comes in with a rush;
He's clothed in a cassock. All near stand aside,
While he hurries past them with passionate stride.

" Sisters, the novice—where is she? declare? "
He sees her. A sigh in the shade over there.
Then, in tones which direct affirmation commands.
" Georgette, do you hear me? " he loudly demands.
The friar, in utt'ring these words, bared his head,
But the eyes of the sick one, half open, betrayed

Not a blank recognition; her dull, haggard gaze
Was veiled by a cloud as though lost in dim space.
He doubted; his soul felt the quick flash of fate,
" Leave us alone," he said, " I've come too late! "

The sky has grown dark; the face of the dying
Is losing its outline beneath the light lying.
By her bedside the crucifix, needed no more,
Has slipped from her hands and dropped to the floor.
Silence now reigns in the convent's gray walls;
A deep, profound hush, sad and mournfully falls,
A feeble, low moaning is now and then heard;
The friar sits motionless, strangely disturbed,
Beneath the bed's hangings with lowly bent brow,
Pleading, commanding, and calling her now.
Then they all noticed a change in his mood,
Strange gestures, and words that were not understood,
Disjointed remarks in a low monotone,
Which suddenly ceased. They had left him alone
By the patient's bedside, because of his claim
To belong to an order revered in its name.
The monk in his anguish and care raised his head,
And saw the pale winding-sheet hung on the bed.

He sprang to his feet with a horrified air,
And, gazing around with a look of despair,
"Too late! I'm too late!" was his heart-broken plaint,
And swayed, as he fell to the ground in a faint.

You, who have once been acquainted with grief,
Ye, who have wept and have prayed for relief
Over your dead, have you sometimes reflected
How much suffers he who, watching, dejected,
Alone by the couch where he sees his love slip
O'er the verge, know how futile the grip
Of hand which he hastens to hold out to cheer?
He who has bent his blanched face o'er the bier,
With burning eye scanning the face of his love
For a flicker of pain, as a symptom to prove
That she lives, and his soul upon the adored
Still hangs, as the fruit to the bough which a sword
Has severed. And as he curses the sight
Of the day, and its garish detestable light,
His heart's full of life which he can not impart,
And hope has expired in his desolate heart.
What remains now? Without hope, without fear,
He looks on these features so calm and austere.
That death's mask of horror. These limbs, long and thin,
That figure so rigid, where life once has been,

These eyes, and that mouth which e'en now retain,
Regardless of death, still their fell look of pain.
He raises the hands; they fall icily back.
He doubts of his saneness; his soul's on the rack.
Death wags her head, and with finger points out
To the being stretched there, without life or thought.

VIII

Yes, all is finished; dust falls back on dust;
The priest has returned to his work, as he must;
Thou hast vanished away, lone flower, of whose bloom
But nothing remains save a nameless cold tomb.
No mourner has followed her mortal remains;
No footprint is left on the road o'er the plains;
Her sire was too feeble, and now she is gone.
Perchance by to-morrow he'll follow her on.
So, poor girl, go to thine unnoticed grave,
Under the stones where the long grasses wave.
The soil is most fertile, and soon will rebloom
Over the débris now covering thy tomb.
Old Earth! thou who knowest how well to keep
The dead, whom the surges throw up from the deep.
Fertile corruption goes on day by day,
Ever demanding new life from decay.
What, then, art thou but a sepulcher, World,
Whose mythical emblem's a serpent incurled.

But you, dreams of mirth and of love, childhood's
song,
And thou, mystic charm, thou defense against
wrong.
Which made Faustus falter before Marguerite,
Sweet fence of the home wherein dwells no de-
ceit,
Thou primitive candor, thou spirit of truth,
What has become of you, Guardian of Youth!

Deep peace to thy soul, thou of sad memories!
Adieu! thy white hand on the ivory keys
Will never again evoke sweet melodies.

IX

Glide on, fairest ship, in the midst of the
night;
The shores of fair Scotland recede from thy
sight.
"Let all eyes be on him, and watch him with
care,
This young man in mourning who stands alone
there."
At the stern of the ship, leaning over the sea,
He sang with wild looks, in an ecstasy he;
Twice have they saved him; they feared he would
fall,
And still the sweet melody witches them all.

The wind softly blows, the bright stars are
gleaming.
" The willow," he whispers, he speaks as if
dreaming.
" Barbara! Barbara! under the willow."
His voice sinks and falls like the storm-driven
billow.
" Children, watch o'er him, his strength seems to
fail."
But still he sang on with a cheek blanched and
pale.
In falling, his voice ceased. " Say, can he be
dead? "
" Children, the sea is rough; put him to bed."
" Ensign," the sailor's voice answered once more,
" This mourning cloak covered wound deep and
sore,
Whence his blood, drop by drop, fell evermore."

1830.

MARDOCHE

Would you mean, as indeed, one may logically infer, that formerly the world which had been foppish should now have become wise?—*Pantagruel,* Book V.

I

I MADE, last year, the acquaintance of a youth
Mardoche by name, who hermit was; in truth,
A prodigy! In this wise, he has never read
Le Journal de Paris, nor novels in his bed.
He ne'er saw Kean, nor Bonaparte, nor yet
Monsieur de Metternich; but kept a cat.
To supper he returned at certain hour
To feed the cat, e'en though caught in a shower.
Let Hugo go to see his Phœbus die.
Mardoche cared not to either laugh or cry.

II

Be satisfied to know for parentage
In the maternal line of lineage
The Maid of Orleans was his ancestress.*
And then he had a friend he could caress,
An English dog of most exalted blood,
Whose master's words are always understood.

* This is evidently a sarcasm.—*Tr.*

He had a bilious temperament, was ill,
And did his leisure moments blandly fill
By cultivating art of writing verse.
To call on him, the Muse was not averse.

III

But this strong-minded rascal, sentiment
Avoided willingly, as if on health intent.
He willingly would make a lamp that shed
Its rays from out the eyes of dead man's head.
He'd sup his soup from skull of grandma dear,
Thought man a mule, and God a muleteer.
Having deprived himself of books, perchance,
He read too much of but one book in France.
I mean the human heart, and hence his wit
Was too precocious, yet he worshiped it.

IV

I certify, however, that his soul
Was tender, and was in his wife's control.
He would be no more harsh to her if she
Had made him a sweet cuckold in her glee!
He held precise opinions, and his chat
Adorned the camp of the aristocrat.
Was so conservative, a love would lurk
For Sultan Mahmoud and the bloody Turk.
For Christian Smyrna and Hellenic blood,
Our hero cared not, by the holy rood!

V

But that does not affect our hero here,
Let people die if he has naught to fear.
Complacent thus he lived an easy life
Without experience of anxious strife.
Was it ambition, or but foolish love?
Most likely both infatuations prove.
Whate'er the cause that caused a change of plan,
This is what happened to my quondam friend,
Mardoche, before he saw his latter end.

VI

I will not tell you which gay dowager
Dying conveniently, did leave of her
Wealth to Mardoche, who then, forthwith, became
A dandy, with the money of the dame.
O four times blessed dowager, in peace
Rest thee, and may thy sorrows have surcease
Because when coughing thou didst spit up blood,
And call for priest and kiss the holy rood.
Thy forehead was anointed, coffin sealed,
And portly form was evermore concealed.

VII

Thy furniture at auction scattered wide,
Each piece did sacrifice thy family pride.
Of wedding-gown was made an umberell;
Thy dressing-room, ye gods, became a hell!

Four greyhounds chased the cat from carpet
where
The best of France had once assembled there.
Thy cushion where thy slipper once reposed
Or where the cat in confidence had dozed
Sees pussy now, his tail blown by the wind,
Cling to the roof, the prey of fate unkind.

VIII

I will not tell you to which lady fair
Mardoche had given of his soul a share.
To whom he owed those lessons, doubly sweet,
The loved one gives the lover at her feet.
I will not tell you at what festival
They held a *tête-à-tête*, or fancy ball.
Where one or both had ventured a love glance
Doubtless the circumstance was largely chance.
What do I know of it in any case?
To follow sight is but a wild goose chase.

IX

One may, indeed, forget appointed tryst,
One's luck, one's birthday, or a blow of fist,
Even borrowed money, yes, one may forget
One's wife and friends, or dog, one's only pet.
But never has a madman at death's door,
Void of his wits, nearing Charon's shore,
Forgotten the first woman's voice who said
In softest accent, " I'm thine own sweet maid."

How sweet the words " I love you, O my king,"
Once hearing these, heaven's bells begin to ring.

X

'Twas in mild autumn days, October sere,
That Mardoche moved again with mankind here.
His cook, who catered to his daily needs,
Vexed him no more than groom who fed his steeds.
But neither groom nor majordomo laid
Such burden on his heart as did a maid.
Of all his habits nothing seemed to change,
But yet his heart 'gan suddenly to range.
I may as well advise that he as neighbor had
Two dark Italian eyes that snapped, egad!

XI

I do adore black eyes and fair blond hair.
Such was Rosine, and it made Mardoche swear
To drown in them. They were two ebon lights
Set in a crystal sky: like keen delights
That follow long continued abstinence,
They sparkled fearlessly in continence.
Sharing a soul infused without alloy,
Speaking the tones that angels but employ.
That Mardoche fancied them is in no wise,
Judicious reader, reason for surprise.

XII

Believe me, since beginning of December,
The weather has been worse than I remember.
It makes me lazy, if not nearly mad,
To keep indoors a writing on my pad.
At fireside seated in my easy chair,
My chin in hand, I nestle in my lair.
And while the north wind at my window blows,
I write some novels, as you may suppose.
And, like Prometheus, give the flame of life
To many women, whether maid or wife.

XIII

Blond hair, dark brows, forehead red, or pale,
Dante loved Beatrice,—so runs the tale,
And Byron, la Guicciolo fair,
But that sweet girl that would my heart ensnare
Would live in Naples, by the sun made dark,
With eyes that scintillate a heavenly spark;
A swan-like neck, full blooded Turkish lip,
A virgin breast, smooth waist and rounded hip:
Such as Giorgione loved to dream,
Or such as this tale which tells of sweet Rosine.

XIV

It is with love as litanies, my friend,
Of Virgin worshipers, they never end.
Once we've begun, we can not stop again,
For like forbidden fruit, we eat amain.

Thus every evening when one seeks repose,
The sun being set, my friend Mardoche arose,
Peered through half-opened blind with his
lorgnette,
Defying all the rules of etiquette.
He scrutinized Rosine from eve till dawn.
Though long the vigil, he would never yawn.

XV

Ye wise philosophers, explain to me
Wise demigods, how this can surely be.
Here is a man who would not steal a sou,
And yet he'll steal your very wife from you.
A wife!—I must explain, for reader's sake,
That sweet Rosine possessed a husband's name.
She once received,—by notary indorsed,
A spouse in Dijon, and was not divorced.
'Tis thought with reason, ere the priest appeared,
Her mother told her all she hoped, or feared.

XVI

What more amusing than the marriage day;
At first, of course, a carriage leads the way;
The rest in keeping, without undue pride,
The worthy Herbeau was well satisfied.
A doll amuses one at six, I ween,
As much as does a husband at nineteen;
All things have ending. Honeymoons will wane,
Beginning ravishing, and end inane!

Love, how strange and perverse is its mood,
It by starvation lives, and dies of food.

XVII

And then, alike in turn, day follows day.
Then follows weariness when none will play.
Then sleeps pale idleness, and leaves her door
Opened. Then enter love, not long before
Reason departs, and life is quickly filled.
One with a lover and his love is thrilled,
This one attacks the goddess, like hussar,
And that one plays the school-boy; each thus far
Attains his object. It is passing strange;
A friend who dined a duchess sought to change

XVIII

The glasses. Said the lady, "Are you mad?
You're drinking in my glass, the glass I had."
The ungallant man remarked, " Do not repine,
For, madam, you can do the same with mine."
The trick, dear reader, certainly was base.
He drank her's empty—a deed lacking grace.
Though powdered, I admit the lady blushed.
What could she do? The conversation gushed.
Heavens! Who can tell which gains reward immense,
Profound respect,—or ill-concealed offense?

XIX

I've no design to perpetrate a novel
Much as a man might hammer out a shovel.
An author who advances with slow tread,
Puts you to sleep ere heroine's in bed.
'Tis not my method, for you will allow
Two weeks have gone already, I avow.
One Sunday morning early, weather fine,
The streets were almost empty, air like wine.
The crowd was sleeping still, some dreamed of Heaven
One Sunday morning, quarter after seven.

XX

Mardoche, in chestnut coat, and hired landau
In front of Tortoni's made passing show.
" Look out," the coachman shouted, " Mardoche rides! "
Grisettes on foot, trotting with pretty strides,
More than once, no doubt, cast at the coach
Of our gay hero, looks of fierce reproach.
He saw them not; preoccupied he seemed,
His nimble mind on some deep problem dreamed.
His look was stiff, he was no diplomat,
He sat in state; and wore a high cravat.

XXI

Where was he going? Why to gay Meudon.
But why so early, and when there, what done?

He soon arrives. Say how is it we tell
Our village by the sound of clanging bell?
The bell supposes steeple, steeple church.
And the church a curé, and the curé's porch,
Requires a heavy beadle, who in truth
May be the school-master of village youth.
This pedant of the parish was indeed
A friend of Mardoche's parents, I will plead.

XXII

Thus landed at Meudon our hero placed
His carriage safely in the place he graced,
Then walked away, nor looked behind, before,
With step more measured than a senator.
For two good hours he used his active feet
Slow strolling, brushing people in the street.
He knew from old times that the good curé
On Sunday mornings took the air away
From home, so straying from the curé's door,
He sought the wood where he had been before.

XXIII

He walked not thirty steps, till facing him,
"How do you do, good father? You look trim!"
The old man was surprised to tell the truth,
To see as in a dream the scheming youth.

" Thank God that all goes well with me, my dear,
I'm glad to see you. Now what brings you
here? "
"A reason, moral, logical and wise.
My beard and bonnet that you might be given
A patriarch's age to guess why I've arriven."

XXIV

The day was glorious and the lark's sweet song
Made music in the air; carts rolled along,
And made the highway dusty. Such a day
As cool October gives us, happily,
The mist was vanquished by the morning sun,
And all was fair the sunlight lay upon.
" Now sit you down my son," the priest en-
joined,
This is the sweetest hour of all." " That wind,"
Said Mardoche, " is a usurer indeed,
Its hand is in your pocket, such is greed."

XXV

" This hour of beauty is the hour of prayer,
See how the eternal lifts the load of care
From feeble mortals," said the good curé.
" It is our duty to give thanks and pray,"
" Good father," said Mardoche, " our feet in
dew
Means a low level for the creature too."

" Mountains," the curé said, " are nearer God.
They are his altars, his supreme abode.
Moses could see him on the flaming peak."
"A man," said Mardoche, " who will mountains
seek,

XXVI

" To me appears but like a foolish fly
On the top of sugar loaf; good father, I
Admit the mountains make us high; our feet
I can't help thinking are for mud to greet."
" Your hair is golden," said the priest, " and
mine
Is snowy white; you'll wiser grow in time."
Said Mardoche, smiling with sarcastic smile,
" Science of mankind is a form of guile."
Then sitting down, " I'll leave such love to you.
I came to have a business talk, 'tis true.

XXVII

" You said but lately, ' I am young,' therefore,
I am in love, a mistress I adore.
'Tis my misfortune she a husband hath
With windows high at end of narrow path."
" I saw you at your birth," the priest replied,
" I held you the baptismal font beside.
Your father took you from the nurse's arms
And as he hushed your innocent alarms,

He said, ' I place him under Church's care.
May he be saved from sin and Heaven share.' "

XXVIII

" My ill-luck," said Mardoche, " is that the fair
By nature are so cruel. I despair,
I understand you well and know 'tis wrong.
But, sir, should we our agony prolong? "
" I know," replied the curé, " that the world
Is where a man in misery is hurled,
Only in abnegation is content."
"Allow me," said Mardoche, " with your consent,
To tell my story. She, I fondly love,
I cannot see, no matter how I strive."

XXIX

" Then," said the curé, " God indeed you've
grieved.
Who is the unhappy man you have deceived? "
" Unhappy? " said Mardoche, " He nothing
knows."
" He knows nothing, my son? No deep repose
Is given secrets." " Well," said Mardoche,
" think
I babble seldom and ne'er use ink."
" Well, even so, my son, I want to know
Is hidden wound but less so fierce a foe?
Will you the less give aught of deep distress
To bond the hand of holy Church may bless?

XXX

" Will you the less commit a deep outrage
To social laws, or less clean life enrage
Even if the secret fellow men condone?
How will it look before th' Eternal throne?
This world is but the phantom of an hour,
With all eternity man fights for power."
" We'll leave this subject," said Mardoche, " I
see
Your cranium and mine own do not agree.
I told you how my mistress is encaged
And with her keeper is for'er engaged."

XXXI

" And," said the priest, " 'tis eminently right,
That she should never leave her husband's sight.
To care for household duties, worship God,
To give her children virtuous abode."
" My virtuous friend," said Mardoche, as they
sat,
" The birds that charm us most do warble flat.
Is not the glorious nightingale quite plain?
And yet the peacock has a voice profane,
Although he wears a robe of green and gold,
Just as a deacon robed, nigh curé old?

XXXII

" Be not astonished therefore, good curé,
To find the finest creatures do not pray.

"And," said the priest, "it is eminently right."

XXX

" Will you the less commit a deep outrage
To social laws, or less clean life enrage
Even if the secret fellow men condone?
How will it look before th' Eternal throne?
This world is but the phantom of an hour,
With all eternity man fights for power."
" We'll leave this subject," said Mardoche, " I see
Your cranium and mine own do not agree.
I told you how my mistress is encaged
And with her keeper is fore'er engaged."

XXXI

" And," said the priest, " 'tis eminently right,
That she should never leave her husband's sight.
To care for household duties, worship God,
To give her children virtuous abode."
" My virtuous friend," said Mardoche, as they sat,
" The birds that charm us most do warble flat.
Is not the glorious nightingale quite plain?
And yet the peacock has a voice profane,
Although he wears a robe of green and gold,
Just as a deacon robed, nigh curé old?

XXXII

" Be not astonished therefore, good curé,
To find the finest creatures do not pray.

Woman, the finest bird, you will admit,
Sings false, and thereupon, I pray, permit
Me finish my recital. 'Twas but yesterday
I came near ending my career so gay."
"Oh!" said the older man, in grievous tone,
"I would to God your sins I could atone."
"In families," said Mardoche, "where they thrive,
Of daughters, I have found some four or five

XXXIII

"To one or two sons only; lacking fraud
Half may be loved without offending God."
"God! My dear child! Come, let us be sincere.
Do you believe in Him?" "I think, curé, 'tis clear
Voltaire believed in Him." "Then why offend?"
"But," said the junior, "I'll my story end.
I do adore that woman, and my joy
Is seeing her; you see, I must employ
Some means of meeting her. I count on you."
"On me!" the curé cried. "Your heart's untrue."

XXXIV

"My heart, dear reverend, I've lost it, see!
If by mistake it were returned to me,
You'll see me flee from it, or send it back,
Like pigeon faithful to the homeward track.

Ah! help me then; I need your timely aid.
To save me in this hour I hope you've prayed."
" And in what way? " the curé said.
Said Mardoche, " Think of the life I've lately led,
Trying to see her. What I need at once—
A furnished chamber, it would be immense!

XXXV

" But the boor watches her. Now here's my plan:
That you've a lovely bedroom I can scan.
The bed has sky-blue curtains; a priest's nest
Is not suspected . . . do you guess the rest? "
" Never," the old man said. " So little time,"
Said Mardoche, " have I to commit a crime,
I'll kill myself right here within this moat."
(He drew a long revolver from his coat.)
" Lay hand upon yourself, your life to end?
God! have you come to this? " inquired his friend.

XXXVI

" Reverend," said Mardoche, " I am tired of life.
Shakespeare, in Hamlet, says we keep the strife
Because one knows not what may after come.
His verses, though, would strike more surely home,
If they advised, one lives for brain's unfit
To cope with bullet driven into it,

To burst it open; jump with single bound
To the lone dwelling of a grassy mound."
"A suicide! Just God! 'Twould damn indeed."
" Our brains," said Mardoche, " are not quite agreed."

XXXVII

" But wait at least, my son, until to-morrow,"
The curé said. " Your deed would give me sorrow.
Nor think of it: a woman in my house! My room!
My son a suicide! His soul in doom!"
" Henry the Eighth," said Mardoche, " did divorce
Seven queens, and killed two cardinals, in course.
Of bishops, he had slaughtered some nineteen,
Priors five hundred and abbots thirteen,
Sixty-one canons and archdeacons too,
Some fourteen, and of doctors fifty slew.

XXXVIII

" I'll kill but one. Dear reverend, I pray,
Speak and decide what I must do to-day!"
" What you must do, I fear will lead to hell!"
" Sir," replied Mardoche, " I can not tell
How true your answer, but no fate I'd shun!"
(The weapon glittered fiercely in the sun.)

" I'm willing," said the old man, " this your rôle
To never speak of it to living soul.
Think of the scandal were it known from hence,
That I had aided your incontinence."

XXXIX

Such was complete the conversation
Which Mardoche had with Évrard at Meudon.
(Évard, the curé's true authentic name.)
Uncle, or nephew, which the guiltier came?
The nephew impious, the uncle soft.
One pleads for heaven, and one for devils oft.
This parallel would make a solemn song,
The uncle kind, while nephew thought of wrong.
Who cares? Enough. And knowing this abide
Whate'er the motive, Mardoche's satisfied.

XL

And more, I said it was a holiday.
A feast at Meudon turns the head astray.
And who could know while he uneasy lies
And on the ground is fixing both his eyes,
The thing he sought? Fact is, in silence now
He makes his worthy, masterly, low bow.
In a brown study then he somewhere goes
Head down, a wolf a-scenting of his foes.
Young men enamoured go with drooping head,
And less by feet than thought are they besped.

XLI

Enamoured man is that, and does not ask
If rain or gravel stays him in his task.
We laugh. Good-luck prevents his elbow thrust,
But folly decks his brow with crown of lust.
His shoulder bears the purple; on his path
Are flutes and torches which the Roman hath.
And such was he whose anxious, worried face
Betrayed the madman, or the poet's grace;
Sooner could you see crop in fields about,
A door without a lock, curé a niece without,

XLII

Than man without a mania, and in love.
Yet as he walked a woman's face above
All shadowed by a veil's transparent weave,
Caused him distress most dreadful to conceive.
What ailed him? Who this beauty under veil?
Perhaps Rosine! Adown this alley pale,
And with a shawl, how could he recognize
Her gait so English, and her heedless grace?
Not alone was she. A man of sallow face
Attending conjugal, trots easy pace.

XLIII

However that may be, our hero chased
The veiled beauty, every foot-print traced.
For long and slowly by the terrace edge
He trailed like basset-hound along some hedge.

Always in silence, firm and deliberate
Whether to go, or some solution wait.
But all at once and to his great surprise,
The foe 'bout-faced, then quick he saw arise
A crisis. So on steady foot and still
He set his collar right and touched his frill.

XLIV

Ye muses! Since John Bull with eyes askance
Beheld Beau Brummel, in despite of France,
Proscribe white waistcoats, sad example, feel
The monstrous pantaloon about his heel;
Down to the times which our compatriot
Boldly his boots half up the leg had got,
Set finally the century to rights,
Released the dandy's calf from prisoning tights.
And ever twisting up a fierce mustache,
A gentleman to windward, cracked his lash;

XLV

If with a tender dreaming air the swell
To show his ring, to stroking ringlets fell,
If ever, above all, aristocratic muff
Has gently smoothed the scarlet downy stuff,
If ever like to any star of night
Beneath the veil a bright eye sparkled bright,
O Muses of Helicon! O chaste Pierides!
Who at the streaming rock your thirst appease,

Was it not when with an uplifted cane
Maradoche skipped by, like lightning o'er the plain!

XLVI

'Twas but a glance, and though past-master he,
Our spouse, I'm sure could almost nothing see.
A Turk who had himself to smoking set
Could have no time to mutter Mahomet.
The lady now had turned her head aside,
And seeming all the pleasure to deride,
Heedless of people and his handsome kin,
Mardoche his carriage found, and hurried in.
"To Paris?" said the groom, closing the portière.
"To Paris;" ah! ridiculous affair.

XLVII

So what to think of this you know not now,
And, reader, want at once to knit your brow;
You have not guessed already, our Mardoche
Brought from Meudon a note in pocket-book.
When you come home you'll be indeed amazed
To see his nose before the mirror raised.
To hear him ask for soap and scold the maid
And, leaving lackey, of the storm afraid,
Dash on his face, as if a flood lustral,
A bottle fresh of oil of Portugal.

XLVIII

O Venus! Torch divine! O pirate star!
To lovers dear! and oh, cravats that are
Crumpled by lovers, days of rendezvous!
How oft a lover ties those knots anew!
How milk of rose and amber o'er him flows!
What waistcoats in his room, what piles of clothes,
Littering at random, thousand times essayed.
Like the poor wounded trodden and dismayed!
And, oh what pins—light darts, the mephasis.
Of dull Delille's fourfold periphrases!

XLIX

O silent words! O lakes! O wall rock made!
Late quitted balcony! O escalade!
Ye masks that give us glimpses, hardly know,
Two holes that from her brow to soul depths go;
Ye hoods discreet, and oh! ye satin cloaks,
Which amorous hands will press with gentle strokes!
Love, love mysterious. Thou misery sweet!
And lamp of silver, light so pale, so neat,
Who sweeter makest the night than milk, or wine!
Sustain my breath to end this verse divine!

L

I mean to sing that day of memory long,
When, dinner done, before black night grew strong,
Our hero, nose beneath his mantle hid,
Mounted his coach one hour before she bid!
And he was gay; you couldn't see a bit,
He tried to count the posts that come and flit,
And when at last the tardy foot-board dropped,
His heart the faster beat, and down he hopped!
The quarter, all of it, was plunged in sleep,
He raised the knocker, slowly breathing deep.

LI

Did you e'er go, and in mild weather too,
Alone, in autumn bound for rendezvous?
It is too early, nothing to be done
To kill, the saying is, the time in fun,
You stop, come back, and for the sake of peace
Go in; your labors on the cushion cease.
Or on the edge of bed, that sacred place
Warm scented by adored head and face!
You listen, wait till memory's angel voice
Awakening faintly speaks, "She comes, rejoice!"

LII

At altars I have seen our Hymen chaste
Join the dry hand of prude, by winters graced,

With roué's unchaste hand of twenty years.
At Havre I've seen her eye with dying leers,
An English chit of melancholy air,
Surely with love's romantic silly care
Some toper at his punch, and just then she
Had soaked what brains she had abominably.
I've seen apprentices, whom dowagers paid,
And Almaviva hire her chambermaid.

LIII

Is it astounding that in Paris once
Two youthful hearts could meet and love for nonce?
Stingy of pleasant nights, the heavens are,
Of pleasant days as much! The soft guitar
May blend with evening breezes, toss your curls,
While fiery white wine through your being whirls,
And may your mistress then be fair to view;
If not, should eye of yours her eye pursue
Oh, then your heart will sink and you will stand
That instrument slow slipping from your hand.

LIV

The author of this book here would insist.
Though lady reader has no pretty wrist.
(He hath no doubt) shall look upon her hand,
Recalling once the last of lover band,

And bear in mind that Mardoche, very young,
Was amorous, had one month fasting hung,
His room was drear, and never larger kiss,
Or kiss more ardent set than that and this,
From lips more tender, or on hands more white
Than those that Rosine's sleeves half kept from
sight.

LV

To tell the truth, it was Rosina warm.
The sudden opening door disclosed her form.
I know not whether our young friend Mardoche
Esteemed his conquest thing without reproach.
He took his profit. Tablecloth and tea,
Biscuits, the fire will flame up cheerfully.
It rained in torrents. Table's nice for two!
A woman, supper, now may demon crew
Come take me were I ever willing led
To ask for better next my evening bed.

LVI

Meantime take notice now that our Rosine
Was blond, the eye was black, the leg cut clean;
Except the feet which seemed a bit too plain,
She joined the body's charm to wit and brain.
It seems then simple, easy to believe
Her faithful spouse, although no man to grieve,
Desired to watch her, was perchance forewarned
Of things clandestine and that might be mourned.

Mardoche and she in fact, thought not of him,
When as at Peter's Feast, he bawled with vim:

LVII

"Unlock this door!" "Pechero!" quoth the dame,
"I'm lost, Mardoche, where shall I hide?" Her flame
Looked for a well, afraid to compromise
His queen, queen of his heart. He rushed to rise
And find a window. Excellent enterprise!
No finer luck! But, oh, he sprained his foot.
O fate bizarre! O fortune's fickle root!
O hapless lover! Lapless loved to boot!
After this fatal blow, how will you end,
And whither does this tragic story tend?

LVIII

At all times spouses, great to spoil the plot,
By eating lover's supper, cut the knot.
That you may see since Master Gil Blas' time,
To young Crébillon and Faublas sublime.
But our young Dijonnais in deep chagrin
Pronounced the thing untimely; and Rosine,
How did she act? She had the sorry look
Worn by Poll Parrot when he quickly took
A bean they gave him, mischieviously neat,
And wrapped in blotting-paper, nice sweet meat.

LIX

She takes with care the envelope, unwraps,
And pulling she suspects a treat, but claps
Her eye upon the end, that mocking cheat,
Then stands in rage and pouting at defeat.
The husband says: "Madame, the convent waits!"
The convent! Vengeance of delusive fates!
Filled was the chalice, fate commands, "Now drink!"
And what the answer of ma belle? That link
Of history is gone. Mardoche? Just for a change
In love, he spends six months in countries strange.

SEPTEMBER, 1829.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
To the Reader	1
To Madame B——	3
To Jungfrau	4
Venice	5
To Ulric Guttinger	8
Sonnet	9
Ballad to the Moon	10
To Madame Menissier	16
To Pepa	18
The Andalusian	20
Song	22
To Laura	23
To My Friend Alfred T.	25
To My Friend B.	27
To Julia	29
Madame La Marquise	31
To Juana	34

PAGE

Octave 36

A Morning Serenade 40

Madrid 42

Suson 44

Secret Thoughts of Raphael 56

Namouna 62

Don Paez 106

Chestnuts from the Fire 126

To the Reader 168

Of What Young Maidens Dream 169

The Cup and the Lip 205

Stanzas 275

The Willow 277

Mardoche 310

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

To the couch of her lover . . . . . *Frontispiece*

FACING PAGE

"Welcome, my beloved" 123

"Mount the horse and come to supper with me" 228

"And," said the priest, "it is eminently right" . 323

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY
Los Angeles
This book is DUE on the last date stamped below.

REC'D LD-URL
JUN 16 1990

REC'D LD-URL
LD URL JUN 2 - 1990
JUL 07 1990

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
A 000 353 836 0